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News Release

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Ceylon woman indicted for stealing \$45,814 in Social Security benefits

MINNEAPOLIS—A woman from the southern Minnesota community of Ceylon was recently indicted in federal court for allegedly stealing more than \$45,000 in Social Security benefits. The indictment, filed on April 12, 2011, in the District of Minnesota, charges Tammi Marie Palmer, age 49, with one count of theft of public money and six counts of making a false statement for use in determining rights to Social Security benefits. Palmer made her initial court appearance earlier today.

The indictment alleges that from June of 2003 through January of 2009, Palmer stole approximately \$45,814.45 in supplemental security income benefits to which she was not entitled. It also alleges that on six occasions, she made false statements to the Social Security Administration during proceedings to determine if she was eligible to receive the payments. Palmer's two sons received the benefits because of disabilities, but Palmer failed to disclose that her then-husband lived with her and was earning a wage. The benefits were subject to household-income limits.

If convicted, Palmer faces a potential maximum penalty of ten years in federal prison on the theft charge and five years on each of the false statement counts. All sentences will be determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Social Security Administration-Office of Inspector General. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Kimberly A. Svendsen.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.

