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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SUPERSEDING INDICTMENT RETURNED AGAINST NASA AND SSA EMPLOYEES
FOR CONSPIRACY AND RECEIPT OF OVER \$240,000 IN
STOLEN DISABILITY BENEFITS AND FALSE PURCHASE ORDERS**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Allen F. Loucks announces that today a federal grand jury returned a superseding indictment against Franklin G. Thomas, age 34, of Baltimore, Maryland and Andrea D. Harrison, age 38, of Towson, Maryland, in connection with receiving over \$240,000 in social security disability payments and false purchase orders.

In addition to the original charge in the May 25, 2005 indictment in which the defendants are alleged to have received \$52,534.50 in social security disability payments, the 24-count superseding indictment also charges that from December 20, 1996, to May 31, 2005, the defendants conspired to receive \$194,849.98 in stolen government funds from NASA. According to the superseding indictment, Thomas was employed as a Benefit Authorizer by the Social Security Administration (SSA), at its Office of Disability Operations in Woodlawn, Maryland. Harrison was employed as a Lead Human Resources Specialist and Organizational Development Lead at the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) at the Goddard Space Center in Greenbelt,

Maryland. Thomas provided no goods or services to NASA.

According to the superseding indictment, Harrison signed NASA purchase orders as the Funds Obligator, Contracting Officer, and Contracting Officer's Technical Representative. Harrison also provided false purchase orders and invoices to NASA in order to trigger payments to Thomas. Harrison prepared purchase orders to be paid to a variation of "The Franklin Thomas Group," at the home address of Thomas. After Harrison falsely certified that the deliverable had been provided, Harrison or Thomas prepared false invoices to NASA requesting payment for the deliverable. Thomas received payments from NASA as wire transfers into his personal bank account and shared portions with Harrison.

The charges include conspiracy, mail fraud, and wire fraud. Each defendant faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison followed by 3 years of supervised release.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

The criminal charges in this indictment are the result of a joint investigation by the Social Security Administration - Office of Inspector General, the National Aeronautics Space Administration - Office of Inspector General, and the United States Attorney's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephanie A. Gallagher.