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South Portland Man Pleads Guilty to False Statement, Theft of Government Property

Portland, Maine: United States Attorney Paula D. Silsby announced that **Peter K. Ruach**, 38, of South Portland, Maine, pleaded guilty yesterday in U.S. District Court in Portland to one count of making a false statement to a government agency and three counts of theft of government property.

According to court records, Ruach began working for the United States Postal Service in November 2004. At the time, Ruach was also receiving housing subsidies under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Public Housing Assistance Program. The program was administered by the Portland Housing Authority. As a recipient of housing assistance, Ruach was required to notify the Authority of any changes in his income. Ruach failed to notify the Authority of his employment with the Postal Service, however, and falsely stated on an annual re-certification form that his only sources of income were Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits and Food Stamp payments. Ruach's failure to disclose his employment caused him to receive approximately \$4,700 in housing subsidies to which he was not entitled.

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) administered the TANF and Food Stamp programs, which are funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture, respectively. Ruach was required to notify DHHS of any changes in his income, but he failed to do so. As a result, he obtained approximately

\$1,650 in TANF benefits and \$1,250 in Food Stamp payments to which he was not entitled.

Ruach faces a maximum possible sentence of 5 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, on the false statement count. Ruach faces a maximum possible sentence of 10 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, on each of the theft counts.

United States Attorney Silsby praised the investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General; the United States Postal Service, Office of Inspector General; and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services.

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