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HACKER PLEADS GUILTY TO IDENTITY THEFT AND CREDIT CARD FRAUD RESULTING IN LOSSES OF MORE THAN $36 MILLION

WASHINGTON – Rogelio Hackett Jr., 26, of Lithonia, Ga., pleaded guilty today before U.S. District Judge Anthony J. Trenga in Alexandria, Va., to trafficking in counterfeit credit cards and aggravated identity theft, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Neil H. MacBride for the Eastern District of Virginia.

According to court documents, U.S. Secret Service special agents executing a search warrant in 2009 at Hackett's home found more than 675,000 stolen credit card numbers and related information in his computers and email accounts. Hackett admitted in a court filing that since at least 2002, he has been trafficking in credit card information he obtained either by hacking into business computer networks and downloading credit card databases, or purchasing the information from others using the Internet through various "carding forums." These forums are online discussion groups used by "carders" to traffic in credit card and other personal identifying information.

Hackett also admitted that he sold credit card information, manufactured and sold counterfeit plastic cards, and used the credit card information to acquire gift cards and merchandise. According to court documents, credit card companies have identified tens of thousands of fraudulent transactions using the card numbers found in Hackett's possession, totaling more than $36 million.

At sentencing, scheduled for July 22, 2011, Hackett will face maximum penalties of 10 years in prison and a $250,000 fine, or twice the gross gain or loss, on the access device fraud charge, and an additional mandatory two years in prison and a $250,000 fine on the identity theft charge.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service and prosecuted by Michael J. Stawasz, a Senior Counsel for the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia.

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