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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

SUFFOLK, SS.

SUPERIOR COURT DEPARTMENT

CRIMINAL NO: 2484CR00483

2484CR00485

COMMONWEALTH

v.

STEVEN STOICO

MARIA GRASSO

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COMMONWEALTH'S STATEMENT OF THE CASE

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The Commonwealth respectfully submits this Statement of the Case to aid the Court, defense counsel, and the probation department in assessing the general nature and circumstances of the crimes alleged. It is not a Bill of Particulars and does not set forth all known facts.

**SUMMARY**

Steven Stoico, a landlord with properties in Boston, Revere, and Chelsea, orchestrated seven false applications for pandemic-era emergency rental assistance funds then-administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development on various dates in 2021, fraudulently obtaining \$95,400 thereby, and unsuccessfully attempting to obtain an additional \$136,200.

In six of the seven false applications, Stoico was named as the landlord. In the seventh application, Stoico, together with Maria Grasso, falsely claimed that Stoico himself was a rental

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tenant of Grasso's husband. Three of the seven fraudulent applications, each naming Stoico as the landlord, were granted. The remainder of the applications were denied.

### **GRANTED FRAUDULENT APPLICATIONS (\$95,400)**

Stoico caused six fraudulent rental assistance applications to be filed naming himself as landlord. These applications related to purported tenancies in six different apartments at 249 Maverick Street in East Boston – a four-floor apartment building owned by Stoico through a trust. Three of these applications were granted, resulting in payments of \$95,400 to Stoico. The tenants named in the three paid applications were Michael Othmer, Brian Howell, and Kaleef Shakur.

On June 15, 2021, an application for emergency rental assistance was submitted, purportedly by Michael Othmer, seeking funds to pay Stoico rental arrears related to Othmer's claimed tenancy at 249 Maverick Street, Apartment #7. This application resulted in a total payment of \$28,800 to Stoico. The Othmer tenancy in Apartment #7 was wholly fictional, and Stoico fabricated supporting documents such as a lease and rental ledger. Othmer never lived in Apartment #7, which was occupied by other paying renters during the relevant time. Notably, for approximately three months of the claimed rental arrears period, Othmer was incarcerated. The initial portion of the award for Othmer's application (\$27,200) was paid to Stoico by direct deposit on August 6, 2021. In the two weeks following this, Stoico paid Othmer a total of \$2,750.

On July 13, 2021, an application was submitted, purportedly by Brian Howell, misspelling Howell's first name multiple times as "Brain," seeking funds to pay Stoico rental arrears related to his claimed tenancy at 249 Maverick St., Apartment #2A, dating back to April 2020. The application was ultimately granted with a total payout of \$36,000 to Stoico. Stoico provided a fabricated lease and rental ledger in support of the application. Howell never lived in Apartment

#2A. At the time Howell's purported lease term began, on January 1, 2020, Howell was incarcerated in state prison. He remained in prison through September 10, 2020, encompassing the first nine months of his "tenancy." During a substantial portion of the "tenancy," 249 Maverick St., #2A was being gut-renovated, and was uninhabited. The initial portion of Howell's award (\$34,000) was paid to Stoico on August 13, 2021. Within three weeks, Stoico then issued three checks to Brian Howell, totaling \$6,000. Two checks misspelled Howell's name as "Brain."

On June 18, 2021, Stoico submitted a landlord application seeking rental assistance funds on behalf of Kaleef Shakur, related to his purported tenancy at 249 Maverick St., Apartment #9A. The application was granted with a total payout of \$30,600 to Stoico. Shakur did not live in Apartment #9A during the relevant period, and Stoico fabricated a lease and ledger in support of the application. Notably, for four months of the time for which rental assistance was sought, pre-trial GPS-monitoring reveals that Shakur was in East Boston at all for only three minutes, on Route 1A. During portions of the relevant period, Stoico in fact used Apartment #9A as a short term AirBnB and VRBO vacation rental. For other portions of time, he leased the apartment to paying residents.

For each of the three fraudulent applications which were granted, Stoico has been charged with Larceny Over \$1,200.

#### **DENIED FRAUDULENT APPLICATIONS (\$136,200)**

Stoico caused three additional fraudulent rental assistance applications to be filed, as the landlord of 249 Maverick Street in East Boston, which were denied by authorities. The tenants named in these three denied applications were Daidon McMillion, Adam Chang, and Irmarié Santos.



On August 30, 2021, a rental assistance application was filed, purportedly by Daidon McMillion, related to his tenancy at 249 Maverick St., Apartment #8. The application, which was denied, sought \$31,500 in rental arrears, dating back to May 2020. Though McMillion did live at 249 Maverick Street, he lived in Apartment #7, and his tenancy in fact began in April 2021. Stoico fabricated supporting documents for this application as well. On May 8, 2021, Stoico sent McMillion text messages directing him to falsely fill out a rental assistance application, and in return Stoico offered to split the award "60/40" and give McMillion an extra three months of free rent. During the period of claimed rental arrears, Stoico used Apartment #8 frequently as an AirBnB and VRBO rental.

On September 15, 2021, a rental assistance application was filed, purportedly by Adam Chang, related to his tenancy at 249 Maverick St., #4. The application, which was denied, sought \$39,600 in rental arrears to be paid to Stoico, which had been purportedly incurred beginning in April 2020. The application was false. Though Chang did live at 249 Maverick Street, he had not lived there prior to March 2021, he had not lived in Apartment #4, and he paid his rent. Chang was unaware of the existence of the false application. Chang's forged signature on a false lease fabricated by Stoico, in support of the application, spelled Chang's first and last names incorrectly.

On September 15, 2021, a rental assistance application was filed, purportedly by Irmarié Santos, related to her tenancy at 249 Maverick St., #2. The application, which was denied, sought \$34,500 in rental arrears to be paid to Stoico. The application was false, and Santos did not live at 249 Maverick Street. Stoico wholly fabricated a rental ledger in support of the application. Santos was unaware of the false application. Other paying residents lived in Apartment #2 during the purported tenancy, and between tenants, Stoico used the apartment as a short term vacation rental.

For each of his three fraudulent applications as a landlord which were denied, Stoico has been charged with Attempt to Commit Larceny Over \$1,200. For soliciting Daidon McMillion to file a false rental assistance application, Stoico has been charged with Solicitation to Commit Larceny Over \$1,200.

In addition to the fraudulent applications naming Stoico as landlord, Stoico and Maria Grasso collaborated to file two duplicative applications for rental assistance naming Stoico as a rental tenant of Everett Amaral, Grasso's husband. Each application alleged a total of \$30,600 in rental arrears. Both were denied.

In May 2021, Stoico obtained emergency assistance funds for mortgage payments for his home, 140 Oakwood Avenue, in Revere, where he averred he lived. On July 30, 2021, Stoico submitted a factually inconsistent application purporting to have been a rental tenant at 51 Lincoln Street, in Revere, for two and a half years, with Everett Amaral as his landlord. He filed a second application for his tenancy at 51 Lincoln on August 18, 2021.

The administering authority confronted both Stoico and Grasso via email with the fact that Stoico had recently been awarded mortgage arrears for a different residence. Stoico and Grasso then each claimed, falsely, that Stoico's daughter had actually resided in the apartment, and Stoico had merely co-signed her lease. Both Stoico and Grasso actively pursued the application. Grasso called the administering agency on two occasions in support of the application, on a recorded line. In the second call, Grasso falsely stated "Steven Stoico is my tenant."

In connection with these facts, both Stoico and Grasso have been charged with Attempt to Commit Larceny Over \$1,200. Grasso has additionally been charged with Conspiracy to Commit Larceny Over \$1,200.

Respectfully submitted  
For the Commonwealth,

ANDREA JOY CAMPBELL  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By:



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**Certificate of Service**

I, Mindy S. Klenoff, hereby certify that on October 17, 2024 I served a copy of the *Commonwealth's Statement of the Case* in-hand on the defendant's counsel.

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Mindy S. Klenoff  
Assistant Attorney General