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Bureau of Motor Vehicles

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COLUMBUS WOMAN SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN FRAUDULENT DRIVER LICENSE SCHEME

COLUMBUS – Betina R. Young, a former clerk at the Gahanna License Agency, was sentenced today to five years of community control and fined \$3,000 for orchestrating a bribery scheme in which she issued nearly 100 fraudulent driver licenses and state ID cards to undocumented foreign nationals.

Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Michael Holbrook also sentenced Young, 44, of Columbus, to serve a jail sentence during Christmas that he referred to as “Holbrook Holidays.” The term of incarceration will be determined at a later date. Holbrook told Young she could not have any involvement in the issuance or brokering of licenses or IDs for the next five years and that she faced 15 years in prison if she violated the terms of her sentence.

Young and a co-defendant, Sekou Kpoto, were each indicted on five felony counts of tampering with records in April 2012 following a lengthy investigation by BMV Investigations and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The investigation found that Kpoto, acting as a middleman, solicited bribes from foreign nationals and then drove them to the Gahanna agency, where Young issued them licenses or IDs after making computer entries attesting that the customers had presented Permanent Resident Cards when they had not.

The investigation found that Kpoto would kick back a portion of the fee paid to him, ranging from \$700 to \$1,500 per transaction. During her seven years of employment at the Gahanna agency, Young issued a total of 95 fraudulent licenses and IDs.

Kpoto, 42, of Columbus, has pleaded not guilty to the charges. No trial date has been set.

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