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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**TWO INDICTED FOR ATM BANK THEFT**  
**USING “DOCTORED” DUNKIN’ DONUTS GIFT CARDS**

*Allegedly Withdrew More Than \$17,700 In Multiple Transactions In One Evening*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that two Romanian nationals in the United States on journalism visas have been indicted on charges of stealing more than \$17,700 from a Chase bank in Hollis, Queens, by rapidly performing multiple unauthorized withdrawals at the bank’s automated teller machines using scores of Dunkin’ Donut gift cards that had been re-encoded with stolen bank account information.

District Attorney Brown said, “Instead of going on a run for coffee and doughnuts with their gift cards, the defendants are instead accused of going to the bank and using its ATMs as their personal slot machines, cashing out large sums of money with each use of their ‘doctored’ Dunkin’ Donut gift cards.”

The District Attorney identified the defendants as Daniel Gheorghe and Ionel Cristian Popa, both 33 with no known addresses in the United States. The defendants were arraigned on Thursday, July 28, 2011, in Queens County Supreme Court in Kew Gardens, Queens, on a 70-count indictment charging each of them with one count of third-degree grand larceny, one count of third-degree criminal possession of stolen property, sixty-six counts of second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument, and two counts of first-degree scheme to defraud. The defendants, who each face up to seven years in prison on each of the 66 counts of second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument if convicted, were ordered held on \$150,000 bail each (with a bail sufficiency hearing) and to return to court on August 23, 2011.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the indictment, Gheorghe and Popa were observed by police in the vestibule of the Chase bank branch, located at 205-19 Hillside Avenue, on the evening of March 31, 2011, rapidly performing multiple unauthorized transactions at the bank’s ATMs using Dunkin’ Donuts rechargeable gift cards that had been re-encoded with stolen account information belonging to various banks – including Chase Bank, Bank of America, Citibank, HSBC, Maestro, Nuvision Federal Credit Unit and US Bank National Association. After each transaction, the defendants allegedly jammed large amounts of cash – mostly twenty-dollar bills – in the pockets of their clothing.

At the time of their arrest, police officers assigned to the New York City Police Department’s 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct allegedly seized \$17,703 in stolen funds and 66 Dunkin’ Donut gift cards from the defendants’ persons and from their vehicle.

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District Attorney Brown explained that a Dunkin' Donuts gift card is marked with a sixteen-digit vendor account number. According to the criminal charges, none of the sixteen digit account numbers displayed on any of the seized cards matched the account numbers encoded on the cards' magnetic strips.

The District Attorney said that police were summoned to the location by investigators from JPMorgan Chase, which proactively protects the personal and account information of its clients against identity thieves.

District Attorney Brown thanked JPMorgan Chase and Dunkin' Brands, Inc. (the parent company of Dunkin' Donuts), for their assistance in the investigation. The arrest was made by Police Officer Frank Caruso, of the NYPD's 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Robert Cimino, of the New York City Police Department's Identity Theft Squad, under the supervision of Sergeant Barry Neiss and Lieutenant Ruperto Aguilar and the command of Deputy Inspector Gregory T. Antonsen, of the Financial Crimes Task Force, and the overall supervision of Deputy Chief Jeremiah Quinlan, Commander of the Special Investigations Division, and Chief Phil T. Pulaski, of the Detectives Bureau.

The District Attorney noted that the investigation was continuing.

Assistant District Attorney Morgan A. Goulet, of the District Attorney's Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Gregory C. Pavlides, Bureau Chief, Christina Hanophy, Deputy Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

It should be noted that an indictment is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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