

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

PLEA TO ELECTION FRAUD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Maria C. Del Toro, age 39 of Salinas, pled guilty to one misdemeanor charge of filing false or fraudulent signatures with the Monterey County Election Department.

In October 2014, Ms. Del Toro was hired to gather signatures for a recall petition of Janet Barnes, Trustee Area 4 of the Salinas Elementary District. She gathered a total of 397 signatures and was paid \$1,900 for her work.

The signatures were submitted to the Election Department, which then did a random sampling for authenticity. It was discovered that a significant number of signatures collected by Ms. Del Toro did not match voter affidavit signatures on file with the Election Department. Investigation by the District Attorney's Office confirmed that the signatures submitted were forged. When confronted with this information, she confessed to submitting the forged signatures.

After pleading guilty, Ms. Del Toro was sentenced by the Judge Andrew Liu to three years probation, 40 days in county jail, and ordered her to repay the \$1,900 she received for her work.

The case was investigated by District Attorney Investigator Tracey Spencer.

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