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PAIR ARRESTED IN ORGANIZED RETAIL THEFT SCHEME

WAREHAM – Two people have been charged with executing an organized retail theft from a local beauty store, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

Today, in Wareham District Court, Bianca L. Cruz, 35, of Lowell, and Jeremy Menendez, 34, of Nashua, N.H. pleaded not guilty at their arraignment on one count each of Organized Retail Crime and Larceny Over \$1,200. Cruz was held on \$50,000, and Menendez was held on \$500 cash bail.

The charges follow an investigation by the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office and Wareham Police. At approximately 7:26 p.m. last night, Wareham Police received a call from an employee at the Ulta Beauty Supply store located at 2421 Cranberry Highway. The employee reported that a male and female entered the store, began filling up several bags with perfume and beauty products, and left the store without paying. The caller told police the pair left in a green Kia Soul. The clerk estimated the stolen items were worth more than \$1,200.

Wareham Police responded to the Ulta Store to investigate and a BOLO was put out for the motor vehicle. Massachusetts State Police located the car traveling along Route 495, and conducted a motor vehicle stop. Cruz was operating the motor vehicle, Menendez was a passenger, and another female, who was identified as the owner of the car. Police were interviewing the female motor vehicle owner, and Menendez, when Cruz accelerated away from the scene, running over the female's foot and causing injury. She was transported to a hospital for treatment. She is not being identified or charged at this time.

The car and Cruz were later located in Bridgewater, and she was placed under arrest.

As a result of the investigation, Wareham Police sought and obtained a search warrant for the motor vehicle, and it was executed today. Inside the car, investigators located more than \$4,500 in Ulta products, and \$1,400 in stolen products that were tracked to TJMaxx in Wareham.

The two are next scheduled to appear in court on June 7. The investigation is ongoing by the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office and Wareham Police.

Retail theft collectively costs communities billions annually, undermining local economies and threatening the viability of storefronts in neighborhoods across the country. In January, 2024, DA Cruz announced the formation of the Plymouth County Organized Retail Theft Task Force, and hosted more than 50 members of law enforcement and retailers at the Brockton office. The intent of the Organized Retail Theft Task Force is to work together with retailers, Chambers of Commerce, law enforcement, and others to address the issue of store theft.