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9 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
10 DISTRICT OF NEVADA

11 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

12 Plaintiff,

13 v.

14 AURORA PHELPS,
aka "Aurora Flores,"
15 aka "Aurora Flores-Velasco,"
aka "Aurora Alvarez,"

16 Defendant.

Case No. 2:23-cr-00167-CDS-DJA

**EX PARTE MOTION TO UNSEAL
SUPERSEDING INDICTMENT AND
USE PHOTOGRAPHS PUBLICLY**

(Filed Under Seal)

17
18 **CERTIFICATION:** This motion is timely filed.

19 **MOTION**

20 The United submits this *ex parte* motion under seal to obtain an order that partially
21 unseals the indictment effective February 11, 2025, and that fully unseals the superseding
22 indictment and arrest warrant effective February 13, 2025. This motion also seeks authorization
23 to publicly use photographs obtained by search warrant during the investigation to assist in
24 locating additional victims.

1 A grand jury returned an indictment against defendant Aurora Phelps in September
2 2023, charging her with wire fraud, mail fraud, bank fraud, identity theft, and kidnapping. An
3 arrest warrant was issued that day as well. The indictment and arrest warrant were sealed by
4 the Court. The Court issued an order on September 22, 2023, partially unsealing the indictment
5 for extradition purposes. Then, on October 4, 2023, the grand jury returned a superseding
6 indictment that corrected a clerical error in the original indictment. The superseding indictment
7 was also placed under seal, and was also partially unsealed for extradition purposes.

8 The extradition proceedings began in Mexico after the defendant was taken in custody
9 in Mexico, where she remains, for crimes she committed against individuals identified in this
10 investigation, including a named victim. The government understands that an extradition
11 warrant has since been issued by a court in Mexico and has been presented to the defendant.
12 The government also understands that the defendant may challenge her extradition, and that
13 the process may involve the disclosure of the charges to her.

14 The superseding indictment alleges that the defendant engaged in a pattern of conduct in
15 which she met men, often through dating services, then defrauded them, and committed other
16 crimes against them. Investigators, through court process, obtained information including
17 photographs the defendant used on dating services, photographs which were likely seen by
18 individuals interacting with the defendant. Although several victims have been identified in the
19 United States and Mexico, the government believes that other victims exist and need to be
20 identified. The government has been in contact with known victims or their families, and
21 meetings have been scheduled with them beginning February 11, 2025, to inform them about
22 the case. Additionally, the government is scheduling a press conference for February 14, 2025,
23 in order to identify other victims and encourage them to come forward. Accordingly, the
24 government requests the partial unsealing of the superseding indictment effective February 11,

2025, to allow the government to adequately inform the victims and their families about the case, and the full unsealing of the superseding indictment effective February 13, 2025, to allow the government to hold a press conference to identify other victims. The government further seeks to use photographs used by the defendant on the dating services, which were obtained by search warrant, in that press conference to help other victims recognize her and come forward with information about their interactions with her.¹

Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 6(e)(4) permits the court to seal an indictment “until the defendant is in custody or has been released pending trial.” Here, the defendant is in Mexico, and it is the government’s understanding that she is knows about the extradition proceedings and cannot be released from custody at least until those proceedings are over. Accordingly, the concerns which prompted the sealing of the superseding indictment have been substantially lessened. For the reasons stated herein, the government requests that the Court partially unseal the superseding indictment effective February 11, 2025, and that it fully unseal the superseding indictment and this motion effective February 13, 2025. *Cf.* Fed. R. Cr. P. 49.1(d) (authorizing the unsealing of court filings). Further, for the reasons given above, the government requests authorization to publicly use photographs obtained during the investigation to assist in identifying additional victims.

Executed on this 5th day of February, 2025.

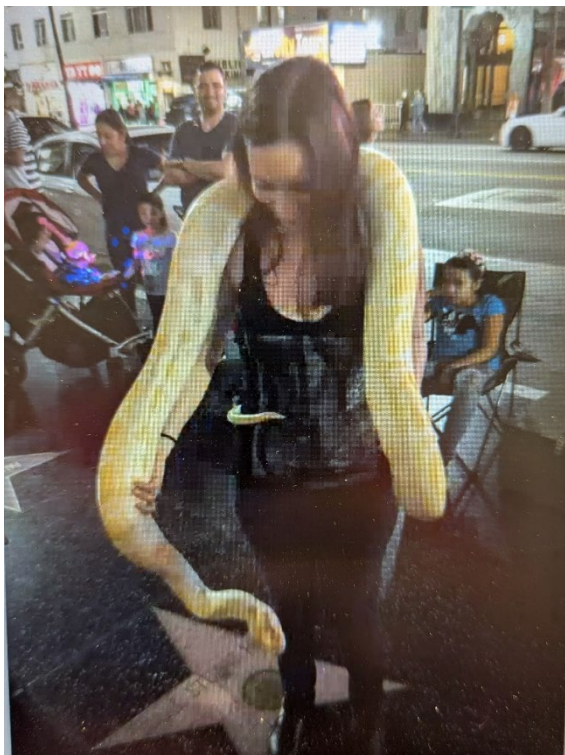
Respectfully submitted,

JASON M. FRIERSON
United States Attorney

/s/ Steven J. Rose
STEVEN J. ROSE
Assistant United States Attorney

¹ Attached to this Motion as Exhibit A are the photographs obtained by warrant, and which the Government seeks to use.

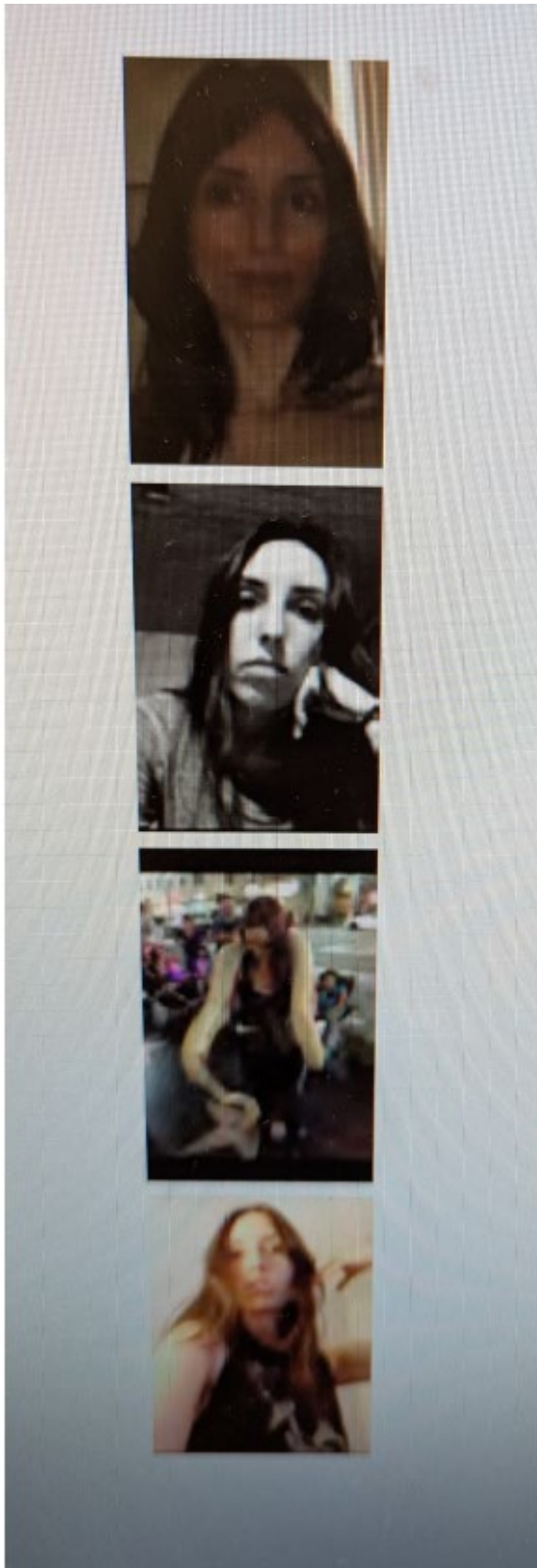
Exhibit A



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5 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
6 DISTRICT OF NEVADA

7 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

8 Plaintiff,

9 v.

10 AURORA PHELPS,
11 aka "Aurora Flores,"
12 aka "Aurora Flores-Velasco,"
13 aka "Aurora Alvarez,"

14 Defendant.

Case No. 2:23-cr-00167-CDS-DJA

ORDER

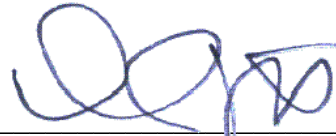
(Under Seal)

15 This matter comes before the Court upon the *ex parte* motion of the United States of
16 America for an Order unsealing the Superseding Indictment issued for the defendant in the
17 above-captioned case. The government has requested a partial unsealing, followed by a full
18 unsealing. The government has further requested the public use of photographs obtained
19 through the investigation to assist in identifying additional victims. Having considered the
20 entirety of the record and files herein, the Court files that based upon the motion of the United
21 States and for good cause shown,

22 IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Superseding Indictment issued by this Court for
23 Aurora Phelps, aka Aurora Flores, aka Aurora Flores-Velasco, aka Aurora Alvarez, in the
24 above-captioned case on October 4, 2023, be partially unsealed, effective February 11, 2025.
The Superseding Indictment will be unsealed on that date to allow the government to provide

1 case updates to the families of the victims named in the Superseding Indictment. Thereafter,
2 effective February 13, 2025, the Superseding Indictment and this motion shall be fully unsealed.
3 The government is further allowed to publicly use certain photographs, those attached to the
4 motion in Exhibit A, that were obtained in the investigation, to identify additional victims.

5 Dated this 10th day of February, 2025.

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8 DANIEL J. ALBREGTS
9 UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
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