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Woman behind decades of robberies sentenced to 50 years

HOUSTON- A Houston woman who spent the better part of the past two decades robbing local businesses or serving time for various crimes, was sentenced by a jury to 50 years in prison Wednesday.

Elonda Javette Calhoun, 41, pled guilty to two 2017 aggravated robberies. During a trial to determine her sentence, prosecutors presented two other aggravated robberies—all four spanning from February to March 2017, while she was on parole.

Calhoun targeted various businesses during her 2017 robbery spree, including Home Depot, Church's Chicken, Marshall's department store, and Subway. She had a similar scheme for each crime: she would walk into a business and tell a cashier to put the money from the register into a bag. Sometimes she would act as if she had a gun. Other times she would flash a firearm. After grabbing the money, she would leave.

“Her impact on these businesses is undeniable,” Assistant District Attorney Ryan Trask said.

“Here you have these multi-million dollar companies adjusting their shifts, and spending additional money on special security—all to protect their customers and employees from this one individual. That speaks volumes to the level threat she had become to this community.”

Calhoun's criminal career started in 1995, when she stole a pack of cigarettes from a Randall's grocery store. While trying to drive away from the scene, backed over two bystanders with her vehicle.

Since then, she's been in and out of prison.

The prosecutor asked her if she could name a single year from 1995-2014 where she was not in prison, on parole, or charged with a crime. She replied that she could not.

Calhoun was twice charged and convicted of impersonating a police officer. During those crimes, which occurred in 2004, she approached would-be victims and showed them a fake badge, just before robbing them.

Due to those previous charges, Calhoun faced 25 years to life in prison in her most recent charges.

Prior to being sentenced, Calhoun listened to 16 victims she'd encountered since 1995. All testified to how their lives changed; some left their jobs, others decided to find a new line of work, and one was diagnosed with PTSD.

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