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153 arrested in South Texas during 12-day ICE operation targeting criminal aliens, illegal re-entrants and immigration fugitives

ICE operation took place in Austin, San Antonio, Rio Grande Valley and Laredo areas

SAN ANTONIO — Federal officers from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) arrested 153 criminal aliens and others throughout South Texas during a 12-day enforcement action which ended Friday.

The operation began March 20 and ended March 31. ERO officers made arrests in the following San Antonio Field Office cities: Austin/Waco (24), San Antonio (62), Laredo (29) and Harlingen (38). Of those arrested, 138 were men; 15 were women.

All the foreign nationals targeted by ICE officers during this enforcement action had prior criminal convictions. The vast majority of those arrested (137 of the 153) had criminal histories that included convictions for the following crimes: aggravated assault with a weapon, aggravate sexual assault of a child, driving under the influence (DUI), sexual assault, burglary, robbery, resisting officer, vehicular manslaughter, alien smuggling, domestic violence, cocaine possession, prostitution, fraud, simple assault, cocaine possession, dangerous drugs and controlled substance distribution.

Those arrested throughout South Texas include foreign nationals from five countries: Mexico (140), Honduras (7), Guatemala (3), Canada (2) and El Salvador (1). Following are criminal summaries of five of those arrested during this operation:

- A 27- year-old woman from Mexico was arrested in Laredo March 20. She has a prior conviction for injury to a child with bodily injury. She was processed and removed to Mexico.
- A 30-year-old man from Mexico was arrested in Austin March 21. He has a prior conviction for delivery of a controlled substance (cocaine). The U.S. Attorney’s Office is prosecuting him for illegally re-entering the United States after being deported.
- A 48-year-old man from Mexico was arrested in Harlingen, Texas, March 24. He was convicted of intoxicated manslaughter with a vehicle. The U.S. Attorney’s Office is prosecuting him for illegally re-entering the United States after being deported.
- A 20-year-old man from Guatemala was arrested in San Antonio March 23. He was convicted of injury to a child with intent to cause bodily injury. He remains in ICE custody pending a hearing before an immigration judge.

- A 46-year-old man from Mexico was arrested in San Antonio March 31. He was convicted of the following crimes: aggravated sexual assault of a child (first degree felony), 2 DUIs and assault. He is in ICE custody pending removal proceedings.

During this ICE operation, ERO officers received assistance from special agents with ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

“ICE’s primary immigration enforcement efforts target convicted criminal aliens,” said Daniel Bible, field office director for ERO in San Antonio. “Consequently, our operations improve overall public safety by removing these criminals from our streets, and ultimately from our country.”

Of the 153 arrested, 33 were presented to the U.S. Attorney’s Office to face criminal prosecution on charges of re-entry after deportation. The others arrested during this 12-day operation are being processed administratively for deportation. Those who have outstanding orders of removal, or who illegally re-entered the U.S. after being deported, are subject to immediate removal. Those remaining in ICE custody are awaiting a hearing before a federal immigration judge or are pending travel arrangements for removal. Anyone who illegally re-enters the United States after having been previously deported commits a felony punishable by up to 20 years in federal prison, if convicted.

All of the targets in this operation were amenable to arrest and removal under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

ICE deportation officers carry out targeted enforcement operations daily nationwide as part of the agency’s ongoing efforts to protect the nation, uphold public safety and protect the integrity of our immigration laws and border controls. These operations involve existing and established [Fugitive Operations Teams](#).

During enforcement operations, ICE officers frequently encounter other aliens illegally present in the United States. They are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and, when appropriate, they are arrested by ICE officers.

In fiscal year 2016, ICE conducted 240,255 removals nationwide. Ninety-two percent of individuals removed from the interior of the United States had previously been convicted of a crime.

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