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03/14/2017

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### **248 arrested in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Delaware, during ICE operation targeting criminal aliens, illegal re-entrants and other immigration violators**





PHILADELPHIA — A total of 248 foreign nationals were arrested over the last two weeks in the states of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Delaware during a targeted enforcement operation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) aimed at criminal aliens, immigration fugitives, re-entrants and other immigration violators.

“ICE officers make extraordinary efforts to keep our communities safe, and this operation is just a small example of what they do every day. ERO officers took oaths to protect the homeland and to arrest individuals in violation of immigration laws,” said ERO Philadelphia Acting Field Office Director Jennifer Ritchey. “This operation resulted in multiple arrests of individuals with violent criminal arrests or convictions in the three-state region.”

“In the Philadelphia area, ICE arrested several at large criminal aliens in which the agency had issued detainers but the City of Philadelphia failed to honor them and released the individuals from custody — a situation that puts the public at unnecessary risk. ICE will continue to conduct targeted enforcement operations, whether local jurisdictions intend to cooperate with ICE or not.”

“These regional operations may result in arrests of individuals other than those initially targeted. Many of these individuals were criminals, who had illegally re-entered the United States, which is a crime under federal law. One of the most egregious individuals encountered during this operation that had not initially been targeted had been deported from the United States on two prior occasions and had a conviction for sexual abuse of a minor,” said Ritchey.

- 120 had a conviction and/or pending charges or 48 percent (88 of those arrested had criminal convictions and 32 of those arrested have pending criminal charges)
- In addition, 50 had been previously removed from the United States and subsequently illegally re-entered.
- Six have been accepted for prosecution by United States Attorneys’ Offices for charges including re-entry after removal and document fraud
- 18 were immigration fugitives with outstanding final orders of removal issued by a federal immigration judge
- Arrests included:
  - The arrest of a 34-year-old male citizen of Guatemala, with criminal convictions for sexual abuse of a minor. The man has been removed from the United States on two prior occasions. The man has been detained without bond and has been referred to the U.S. Attorney’s Office for criminal prosecution. He’s currently in ICE custody at York County Prison.
  - The arrest of a 52-year-old male citizen of Lithuania, with three criminal convictions for driving under the influence. Philadelphia Police Department arrested him on his fourth Feb. 23, 2017. The man was released from Philadelphia Police custody on Feb. 23, 2017, when a detainer lodged with Philadelphia authorities was not honored. The subject is

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being detained without bond pending immigration proceedings. He's currently in ICE custody at York County Prison.

- The arrest of a 65-year-old male citizen of Vietnam, with criminal convictions of three counts of manufacture, delivery, or possession with intent to manufacture or deliver marijuana, four counts of conspiracy, two counts of theft of services, and one count of intentional possession of a controlled substance by person not regulated. The arrest resulted in the seizure of over 1100 marijuana plants that were located in a vehicle and a residence owned by the subject. On May 13, 2016, Berks County Court of Common Pleas convicted him of felony charges, which include: one count of manufacture, delivery, or possession with intent to manufacture or deliver marijuana, one count of conspiracy, and one count of theft of services. He is being held without bond pending removal proceedings. He's currently in ICE custody at the San Antonio Field Office.
- The arrest of a 22-year-old male citizen of Gambia, who was previously arrested by the Philadelphia police for aggravated assault. The subject allegedly assaulted his girlfriend and attempted to force her upper body into a hot oven during a domestic dispute. An ICE detainer lodged with Philadelphia authorities was not honored. Criminal charges are pending. He's currently in ICE custody at York County Prison.
- The stats cover the entirety of the agency's fugitive operations arrests in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Delaware from Monday, Feb. 27, 2017 through Friday, Mar. 10, 2017.
- This week's enforcement operations were conducted in accordance with routine, daily targeted operations conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) fugitive operations teams every day to arrest criminal aliens and other individuals who are in violation of our nation's immigration laws.
- ICE deportation officers conduct targeted enforcement operations every day in locations around the country 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 are existing, established fugitive operations teams. ICE does not conduct sweeps, checkpoints or raids that target aliens indiscriminately.
- This operation targeted public safety threats, such as convicted criminal aliens and gang members, and individuals who have violated our nation's immigration laws, including those who re-entered the country after being deported and immigration fugitives ordered deported by federal immigration judges.
- Those not being criminally prosecuted will be processed for removal from the United States. Those who have outstanding orders of deportation, or who returned to the United States illegally after being deported, are subject to removal from the country.
- Reports of ICE checkpoints and sweeps are false, dangerous and irresponsible. These reports create panic and put communities and law enforcement personnel in unnecessary danger. Any groups falsely reporting such activities are doing a disservice to those they claim to support.
- During targeted enforcement operations ICE officers frequently encounter additional suspects who may be in the United States in violation of federal immigration laws. Those persons will be evaluated on a case by case basis and, when appropriate, arrested by ICE.

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