

Dominican National Pleads Guilty to Heroin and Fentanyl Conspiracy

The alleged leader of a Boston-based heroin and fentanyl trafficking organization pleaded guilty Tuesday, August 21 in federal court in Boston.

Jose Antonio Lugo-Guerrero, a/k/a Fernando Rivera-Rodriguez, 40, who formerly resided in Mattapan, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute more than one kilogram of heroin, more than 400 grams of fentanyl, and more than five kilograms of cocaine, and one count of possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. U.S. District Court Judge Indira Talwani scheduled sentencing for Nov. 27, 2018. In February 2017, Lugo-Guerrero was arrested and charged along with 22 co-defendants.

From mid-2016 through February 2017, federal law enforcement investigated two drug trafficking organizations operating in Taunton and Boston; the former led by Fernando Hernandez, and the latter led by Jose Antonio Lugo-Guerrero. Hernandez's organization sold heroin and fentanyl to customers who re-distributed a portion of the drugs they obtained. Hernandez obtained drugs from a network of suppliers that included Lugo-Guerrero.

Lugo-Guerrero sold kilograms of heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine to customers in Boston, New Bedford, Fall River, and surrounding areas. The evidence, including federal wiretaps in late 2016 and early 2017, further showed that he obtained some of the drugs he sold by robbing other drug dealers. On Nov. 3, 2016, Lugo-Guerrero and five co-defendants traveled to New Bedford panning to rob a drug dealer who had stolen half a

kilogram of heroin from Lugo-Guerrero. At Lugo-Guerrero's direction, one of the co-defendants transported a firearm and provided it to another co-defendant just before the attempted robbery. Based on intercepted communications, law enforcement agents were aware of the planned robbery and stopped and questioned the defendants before it occurred. As a result, Lugo-Guerrero aborted his plan that night and returned to Boston.

In February 2018, Hernandez was sentenced to 188 months (15½ years) in prison after pleading guilty in November 2017. The court found that Hernandez was responsible for distributing more than a kilogram of heroin over a two-month period in the summer of 2016.

Lugo Guerrero faces a mandatory minimum 15 years in prison and up to life, a minimum of five years of supervised release, a fine of up to \$4 million, and will be deported upon completion of his sentence. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Brian D. Boyle, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, Boston Field Division; Colonel Kerry A. Gilpin, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police; Fall River Police Chief Albert F. Dupere; New Bedford Police Chief Joseph C. Cordeiro; Taunton Police Chief Edward James Walsh; Boston Police Commissioner William Gross; Bridgewater Police Chief Christopher Delmonte; and Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Ted Heinrich of Lelling's Narcotics and Money Laundering Unit is prosecuting the case.