

Thirty-Two Kilos of Fentanyl Worth \$28.8 Million Seized and Two Dominican Nationals Arrested for Trafficking

Two Dominican nationals were arrested yesterday and charged in federal court in Boston with fentanyl trafficking in connection with the seizure of approximately 32 kilos of fentanyl with an alleged street value of \$28.8 million. A firearm and \$20,000 were also recovered.

Angel Javier Morell-Oneill, 33, a Dominican national residing in Methuen, was charged with one count of possession with intent to distribute 400 grams or more of fentanyl, and Jose A. Rodriguez, 41, was charged with one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and to distribute fentanyl.

According to the charging documents, law enforcement began investigating Morell-Oneill in June 2018. The investigation culminated with a traffic stop on Pleasant Valley Street in Methuen on Oct. 22, 2018, during which officers seized two kilos of fentanyl from the front passenger seat of the vehicle Morell-Oneill was driving.

After seizing the drugs, law enforcement executed a search warrant at Morell-Oneill's residence in Methuen where they allegedly seized approximately 30 kilos of fentanyl, drug distribution paraphernalia, and a loaded firearm.

Rodriguez was arrested when he arrived at Morell-Oneill's residence to deliver \$20,000, which was to be used to pay for half of the transportation costs of a narcotics shipment recently delivered to Morell-Oneill. The money was seized from a hidden compartment in a car driven by Rodriguez.

Rodriguez faces a sentence of no greater than 20 years in prison, a mandatory minimum of three years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million. Morell-Oneill faces a mandatory minimum of 10 years and up to life in prison, a mandatory minimum of five years and up to a lifetime of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$10 million. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based on the United States Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Brian D. Boyle, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division; and Colonel Kerry A. Gilpin, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police, made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Somerville, Medford, Boston, Ipswich, and Arlington Police Departments. Assistant U.S. Attorney Katherine Ferguson of Lelling's Narcotics and Money Laundering Unit is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.