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## News Releases



SEPTEMBER 26, 2012 FAYETTEVILLE, AK

### Arkansas businessman sentenced for multi-state illegal alien hiring scheme

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – An Arkansas business owner was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison Monday for providing counterfeit immigration documents and Social Security cards to illegal aliens and then employing them at various locations across three states. The sentence follows an investigation led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Valentin Gutierrez, 53, owner of Action Staffing and Action Labor Contractors in Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama, was sentenced as a result of his May 10 guilty plea to one count of harboring and shielding illegal aliens for financial gain. In addition to the sentence Gutierrez was ordered to pay \$10,000 in fines and to serve two years supervised release upon his release from prison.

HSI special agents received information in November 2008 that Gutierrez was employing illegal aliens and providing them with counterfeit work authorization documents. HSI subsequently arrested 13 foreign nationals associated with the scheme. Investigators also determined from financial records that Gutierrez made at least \$6.4 million from May to December 2008 as a result of selling illegal alien labor to various companies. HSI seized Gutierrez's bank accounts and recovered approximately \$117,000 in forfeited funds traced to harboring and shielding illegal aliens.

The FBI along with task force officers from the Rogers Police Department, the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Springdale Police Department assisted with the case.

Scott Crawford, resident agent in charge of the HSI Fayetteville field office said this successful prosecution resulted from a coordinated effort of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and this case illustrates the serious consequences of harboring and shielding illegal aliens.

"This case shows that individuals who violate immigration laws face significant penalties along with the forfeiture of proceeds gained as a result of their criminal activity," said Crawford. "This sentence serves as a stark reminder that employing illegal aliens or assisting others in doing so is a serious crime that carries serious penalties. Federal, state and local law enforcement partners work vigilantly each day and will continue to identify these criminals and ensure they face justice."

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

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