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Enforcement and Removal

11/06/2019

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ICE arrests 19 in Massachusetts during 4-day operation targeting criminal aliens with drug offenses



BOSTON – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) officers arrested 19 individuals in several counties throughout Massachusetts during a four-day enforcement action, targeting criminal aliens who have been convicted or charged with fentanyl, heroin, and other drug-related trafficking crimes. Many of these criminal aliens were released from local law enforcement custody into Massachusetts communities with no notification to ICE.

Those arrested during the enforcement action hail from seven different countries – Bahamas (1), Brazil (4), Cape Verde (4), Dominican Republic (6), France (1), Guatemala (1), Haiti (2).

“ERO deportation officers are committed to enforcing immigration laws fairly and professionally, while protecting the neighborhoods of the Commonwealth,” said Deputy Field Office Director Todd Lyons for ICE ERO Boston. “This operation clearly shows that ICE’s enforcement efforts continue to target criminal aliens with serious drug offenses who clearly represent a threat to public safety.”

- On Nov. 3, ICE arrested a Cape Verde national in Brockton. He has multiple prior convictions for crack cocaine, breaking and entering (2 counts), possession of cocaine and heroin, and vandalism prison property, among others. He was released from state custody on or about in March, though an ICE detainer was on file with local authorities. He will remain in ICE custody pending his immigration court hearing.
- On Nov. 4, ICE arrested a Brazilian national in Weymouth. She has pending charges of assault with intent to murder and two counts of assault with a dangerous. She will remain in ICE custody pending removal proceedings.
- On Nov. 4, ICE arrested a fugitive alien from Cape Verde in Brockton. He has a conviction for cocaine distribution and was ordered removed from the United States in 2011 but failed to depart. He will remain in ICE custody pending removal.
- On Nov. 4, ICE arrested a Dominican national in Lowell. He has pending charges for trafficking cocaine and false identity, was removed from the country in 2018 and illegally reentered. He has been charged in federal court with reentry after deportation, a federal felony which carries a maximum prison term of up to 20 years. He is currently in U.S. Marshals Service custody.
- On Nov. 4, ICE arrested a Cape Verde national in Brockton. He has convictions for possession of cocaine and oxycodone with intent to distribute and convictions for firearms and will remain in ICE custody pending his immigration proceedings.

About Detainers

ICE lodges detainers on individuals who have been arrested on criminal charges and who ICE has probable cause to believe are removable aliens. The detainer asks the other law enforcement agency to notify ICE in advance of release and to maintain custody of the alien for a brief period of time so that ICE can take custody of that person in a safe and secure setting upon release from that agency's custody. When law enforcement agencies fail to honor immigration detainers and release serious criminal offenders onto the streets, it undermines ICE's ability to protect public safety and carry out its mission.

Congress has established no process, requirement, or expectation directing ICE to seek a judicial warrant from already overburdened federal courts before taking custody of an alien on civil immigration violations. This idea is simply a figment created by those who wish to undermine immigration enforcement and excuse the ill-conceived practices of sanctuary jurisdictions that put politics before public safety.

Sanctuary Policies Put Public Safety at Risk

- When law enforcement agencies don't honor ICE detainers, these individuals, who often have significant criminal histories, are released onto the street, presenting a potential public safety threat. When ICE Fugitive Operations officers have to go out into the community to proactively locate these criminal aliens, it can create additional risks to our personnel and to public safety.
- Any local jurisdiction thinking that refusing to cooperate with ICE will result in a decrease in local immigration enforcement is mistaken. Local jurisdictions that choose to not cooperate with ICE are likely to see an increase in ICE enforcement activity, as the agency has no choice but to conduct more at-large arrest operations. A consequence of ICE being forced to make more arrests on the streets is the agency is likely to encounter other unlawfully present foreign nationals that wouldn't have been encountered had we been allowed to take custody of a criminal target within the confines of a local jail.
- Additionally, once these criminals are out on the street, confirming their whereabouts is often time consuming and resource intensive. Many of our arrest targets are seasoned criminals who are savvy about eluding law enforcement.

Despite the severe challenges that local policies have created for ICE, we remain committed to our public safety mission and we will continue to do our sworn duty to seek out dangerous criminal aliens and other immigration violators. ICE seeks straightforward cooperation with all local law enforcement and elected officials. ICE deportation officers carry out targeted enforcement actions 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.

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