



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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**TWELVE TEXAS MEXICAN MAFIA MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES
CHARGED IN FEDERAL RACKETEERING INDICTMENT**

John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney, FBI Special Agent in Charge Ralph G. Diaz (San Antonio Division), ICE Special Agent in Charge Jerry Robinette (San Antonio Division) and the Texas Department of Public Safety – Criminal Intelligence Service announced today the indictment of twelve Texas Mexican Mafia members and associates for various federal racketeering offenses committed in Uvalde, Eagle Pass, Del Rio and the surrounding area . The six count indictment, returned by a Grand Jury on July 14, 2009, was unsealed today after agents of FBI, ICE, DPS and other agencies arrested six of the defendants. The remaining defendants already were in custody on other charges.

Charged with conspiracy to violate racketeering laws are: Javier Guerrero, a/k/a “Javi”; Valdomero Hernandez, Jr., a/k/a “Oso”; Orlando Guerrero, a/k/a “Javelin”; Arturo Villarreal, a/k/a “Pollo”; Victor Esquivel, a/k/a “Youngster”; Juan Alfredo Gloria-Perales, a/k/a “Freddy”; Jesse Joe Oranday, a/k/a “J.J.”; Nicolas Alvarez, a/k/a “Nick”; Ernesto Ramon, Jr., a/k/a “Neto”; Miguel Guerrero, a/k/a “Mike”; Abel Melendrez, a/k/a “Hollywood”; and Francisco Corrales, a/k/a “Brisket.” Defendants Villarreal, Gloria-Perales, Oranday, Ramon, Corrales, and Miguel Guerrero were each arrested this morning without incident.

The indictment alleged that defendants conspired to conduct the affairs of the Texas Mexican Mafia through a pattern of racketeering activity, which included murder, solicitation of murder, drug trafficking, and extortion. The extortion took the form of coercive collection of a ten percent drug tax, also known as “the dime,” from drug distributors known to the members of the criminal enterprise. Collection was enforced by robbery, serious bodily injury, or other acts of violence, including death. According to the indictment, Javier Guerrero, Valdomero Hernandez, Jr., Orlando Guerrero, Arturo Villarreal, and Miguel Guerrero held leadership positions in the enterprise.

In addition to the conspiracy, the indictment charged Javier Guerrero, Valdomero Hernandez, Jr., and Orlando Guerrero with offenses related to the murder of Christopher Mendez in aid of racketeering in December 2006; and Javier Guerrero, Arturo Villarreal, Victor Esquivel, Juan Alfredo Gloria-Perales, and Jesse Joe Oranday with offenses related to the murder of Jose Damian Garza in aid of racketeering in July 2008. Upon conviction, each defendant charged with murder faces either life in federal prison or the death penalty.

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As alleged in the indictment the Texas Mexican Mafia was formed in the early 1980's by inmates in the Texas prison system. Over the years, the gang has expanded its efforts to promote widespread criminal activity through extortion, narcotics trafficking, and violent crime. Also known as "La Eme" or "Mexikanemi," the organization has been the subject of numerous federal indictments in the Western District of Texas since 1993. This indictment, however, is the first to directly target the gang's machinery operating along the Texas-Mexico international border in the cities of Eagle Pass, Del Rio, Crystal City, Carrizo Springs, Uvalde, Sabinal and Hondo.

"The Texas Mexican Mafia continues to present itself as a criminal threat to our communities both large and small, and as such, cooperative investigative efforts by local, state and federal agencies will continue to be employed to eliminate the influence and effect of these criminals upon our communities," said Ralph G. Diaz, FBI Special Agent in Charge.

"This investigation and the ensuing arrests have dealt a serious blow to what is arguably one of the most ruthless gang cliques currently operating in the South Texas area," said Jerry Robinette, ICE Special Agent in Charge. "As this case shows, the Mexican Mafia gang thrives on violence, violence that is often fueled by profits from their illegal activities. Left unchecked, these activities threaten the welfare and safety of our communities. Together with a number of law enforcement partners, we met our goal to minimize this organization's ability to thrive in our communities at the public's expense."

"The Mexican Mafia gang members are violent, ruthless drug trafficking criminals," said DPS Criminal Law Enforcement Chief Tom Ruocco. "Thanks to this combined law enforcement effort, these communities are safer because of today's arrests. Criminal gangs are a menace to public safety."

This case resulted from a joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Texas Department of Public Safety – Criminal Intelligence Service, with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Hondo Police Department and the Texas Department of Public Safety – Texas Rangers. Assistant United States Attorney Jason D. Schall is prosecuting the case on behalf of the government.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.

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