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**GERMANTOWN MAN WHO IMPERSONATED A FEDERAL IMMIGRATION
AGENT PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD SCHEME**

Greenbelt, Maryland - Robert Fred Mejia, age 29, of Germantown, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to conspiring to transport money obtained by fraud across state lines and to impersonate an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) officer; and to transporting money obtained by fraud, in connection with a scheme to purportedly provide immigration services. Mejia also pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of ammunition.

The guilty plea was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Special Agent in Charge William Winter of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Office of Homeland Security Investigations; Special Agent in Charge Peter P. Paradis, Sr. of the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General; Chief J. Thomas Manger of the Montgomery County Police Department; and Montgomery County State’s Attorney John McCarthy.

According to the plea agreement, from December 2007 to June 2009, Mejia and a conspirator charged over 50 individuals for immigration services which they did not provide. On numerous occasions, Mejia and his co-conspirator caused such individuals in Washington D.C. and Virginia to bring \$5,000 or more to their office in Gaithersburg, Maryland to pay for the purported immigration services. Mejia and the co-conspirator completed immigration documents and had fingerprints taken for the individuals. No paperwork was ever filed on behalf of those clients, however.

As part of the fraud scheme, during meetings with the individuals seeking immigration assistance, Mejia dressed as an ICE employee, wearing: a shirt bearing the letters “ICE;” what appeared to be a gun in a holster and pepper spray; a bullet proof vest; and a hat bearing the letters “ICE.” Mejia also displayed what appeared to be an ICE identification badge and drove a vehicle that resembled a police vehicle. At no time was Mejia employed by ICE or any other agency of the United States.

As a result of the fraud, between 50 and 250 victims from the District of Columbia and Virginia lost between \$400,000 and \$1 million.

In addition, Mejia admitted that he illegally possessed 50 rounds of 9 mm ammunition and 49 rounds of .44-40 ammunition, which were seized by law enforcement during a search of his home on June 26, 2009. Mejia was prohibited from possessing the ammunition due to a previous 2nd degree assault conviction in Montgomery County.

Mejia faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison for the conspiracy; and 10 years in prison for interstate transportation of money obtained by fraud and for being a felon in possession of ammunition. Chief U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow has scheduled sentencing for January 20, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. Mejia remains detained.

Mejia was previously convicted of related state charges and is scheduled to be sentenced on those charges in November.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked ICE, Homeland Security Investigations; the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General; ICE- Office of Professional Responsibility; the Montgomery County Police Department; and the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office for their work in this investigation and prosecution. Mr. Rosenstein commended Assistant United States Attorney Mara Zusman Greenberg, who is prosecuting the case.