



United States Attorney's Office for the State of Maryland

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**MEMBER OF RING THAT DISTRIBUTES FALSE DOCUMENTS
TO ILLEGAL ALIENS IN THE BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON METRO
AREA SENTENCED TO FOUR YEARS IN PRISON**

Baltimore, Maryland - U.S. District Judge William M. Nickerson today sentenced Andres Fernandez-Cruz, age 57, a Mexican citizen present in the United States illegally, to four years in prison followed by three years of supervised release for fraud in connection with identification documents and aggravated identity theft, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. Fernandez-Cruz will be deported from the United States after serving his prison term.

According to his guilty plea, Fernandez-Cruz worked in an organization that distributed false documents in the Baltimore/Washington metropolitan area. The organization created and distributed over 100 sets of documents, including false social security cards, permanent resident or resident alien cards and driver's licenses. Individuals used computers, printers and other equipment to create the

false identification documents. The sets of documents are sold for \$80 to \$150, mostly to aliens who are not legally in the United States. Social security numbers were sometimes supplied by the customer, and sometimes randomly selected. Some of these social security numbers had been assigned to real individuals.

Fernandez-Cruz worked in the Baltimore operation, taking orders for and distributing false documents, and collecting payment. On November 25, 2007, Fernandez-Cruz was on South Broadway in Baltimore, where he transferred an envelope containing a fake resident alien card and fake social security card to an undocumented alien, who paid Fernandez-Cruz \$80. After the transfer of the fake documents, Fernandez-Cruz was arrested. At the time of his arrest, he had in his possession an additional set of fake documents, including a permanent resident card and social security card.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General for their investigative work, and commended Assistant United States Attorney Tamera L. Fine, who prosecuted the case.