



**United States Attorney Benjamin G. Greenberg
Southern District of Florida**

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**President and Vice President of South Florida Construction Company Charged with
Defrauding Low-Income Housing Development Program**

President and vice president of South Florida construction company charged with defrauding low-income housing development program.

Benjamin G. Greenberg, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Rafiq Ahmad, Special Agent in Charge, United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG), Nadine Gurley, Special Agent in Charge, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General (HUD-OIG), Juan J. Perez, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD), and Mary T. Cagle, Inspector General, Miami Dade County Office of the Inspector General, made the announcement.

Javier Estepa, 47, of Davie, Florida and **Diego Alejandro Estepa Vazquez**, 36, of Boca Raton, Florida, were charged in a four-count indictment with conspiracy to commit wire fraud in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349, and wire fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343. The defendants are scheduled to have their initial appearance on June 25, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. before United States Magistrate Judge Patrick A. White. If convicted, the defendants face up to twenty years in prison, three years of supervised release, a \$250,000 fine, and restitution, as to each charged count.

According to the indictment, between June 2014 and December 2016, Estepa and Estepa Vazquez engaged in a scheme to unlawfully enrich themselves by securing Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development (PHCD) bid awards and causing payments on those contracts by making materially false and fraudulent representations and by concealing material facts.

President Estepa and Vice President Estepa Vazquez of Aaron Construction Group submitted bids to PHCD for specific renovation and repair of low-income housing in various locations throughout Miami-Dade County. It is alleged that, in their bids, Estepa and Estepa Vazquez falsely and fraudulently represented the number of workers to be employed on the projects, claimed subcontractors would not be utilized in connection with the contract, and asserted

that Aaron Construction would obtain workers compensation insurance, in accordance with state laws. By falsely and fraudulently under reporting the number of workers on the projects, Aaron Construction was able to submit lower bids for the PHCD repair work. In order to obtain payment from PHCD, Estepa and Diego Estepa Vazquez submitted Periodic or Final Estimates for Payment and supporting documents that allegedly contained false and fraudulent payroll records, falsely characterized subcontractors and subcontractor employees as employees of Aaron Construction, and included sworn statements of compliance that falsely and fraudulently certified that the information submitted was true and correct. As a result of these false and fraudulent submissions, PHCD transferred funds to bank accounts controlled by Estepa and Estepa Vazquez.

An indictment is a charging instrument containing accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Mr. Greenberg commended the investigative efforts of the DOL-OIG, HUD-OIG, MDPD's Public Corruption Unit and the Miami Dade County Office of the Inspector General in this matter. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Joshua S. Rothstein.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida at www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at www.flsd.uscourts.gov or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.