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Docket #: 1:15-cr-325 LJO

**TEXAS MAN INDICTED FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FRAUD PERPETRATED
THROUGH MISUSED IDENTITIES AND UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS**

FRESNO, Calif. — Fernando Alanis, 52, of Rio Grande City, Texas and Parlier, California, was arrested yesterday pursuant to an indictment charging him in connection with an unemployment insurance fraud scheme, United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner announced. On November 19, 2015, a federal grand jury returned a 20-count indictment against Alanis charging him with mail fraud.

According to court documents, Alanis was a supervisor with a farm labor contractor located in Sanger, California. Alanis would arrange for the hiring of laborers and would supervise forepersons or "crew bosses" who would oversee laborers in fruit packing houses and agricultural fields. Alanis would employ undocumented workers by having the laborers work under the identities of Alanis' relatives and acquaintances who were authorized to work in the United States. The wages earned by the undocumented laborers would be reported to the California Employment Development Department as wages earned by the identities arranged by Alanis, and not by the actual workers who earned the wages. After the seasonal agricultural employment was over, Alanis provided documentation to the individuals whose identities were used to enable them to file unemployment insurance claims for work they never performed and wages they did not earn. The individuals whose identities were used would pay Alanis for the information to enable the unemployment insurance claims, or would otherwise share those stolen benefits with Alanis.

This case was the product of an investigation by the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the California Employment Development Department, Investigation Division. Assistant United States Attorney Henry Z. Carbajal III is prosecuting the case.

If convicted, Alanis faces a maximum statutory penalty of twenty years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Any sentence, however, would be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables. The charges are only allegations; the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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