

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Mississippi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Meridian Residents Charged with Harboring and Employing Illegal Immigrants

Jackson, Miss – Cheng Lin, 35, Guo Guang Lin, 60, and Yan Fei Tang, 33, all of Meridian, have been charged in a four-count criminal indictment with harboring and shielding illegal aliens, hiring illegal aliens, continuing employment of illegal aliens, and wire fraud, announced U.S. Attorney Mike Hurst. Lin and Lin are Legal Permanent Residents and Tang is an illegal alien from China living in Meridian.

According to the indictment, Lin, Lin, and Tang engaged in a pattern and practice of employing illegal aliens at China Buffet II in Meridian, Mississippi. They transported the illegal aliens to and from work daily, provided housing, deducted rental payments from the cash wages of the illegal aliens, and submitted false tax documents, all in an effort to shield the illegal aliens from detection by authorities.

"Those who come into our country illegally and those who harbor and employ them will be vigorously prosecuted by this office. We will not allow those who violate the law to steal jobs and expend resources intended for American citizens and those here legally," said U.S. Attorney Hurst.

The U.S. Attorney's Office is also seeking forfeiture of proceeds and property used to facilitate the offenses, including \$594,240 in currency, a house in Meridian, and a Ford van.

Lin, Lin, and Tang appeared for arraignment today before U.S. Magistrate Judge F. Keith Ball. A trial is scheduled for January 8, 2018, before U.S. District Judge David C. Bramlette, III.

If convicted on all charges, the defendants each face a penalty of up to 80 years in prison and fines in excess of \$500,000.

The case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations and the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Glenda Haynes and Dave Fulcher.

The public is reminded that a criminal indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. It is merely an accusation and each defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.