

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
CENTRAL DISTRICT *of* CALIFORNIA

[U.S. Attorneys](#) » [Central District of California](#) » [News](#)

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Central District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, November 21, 2022

Former Federal Agent Sentenced to More Than 10 Years in Prison for Accepting Bribes to Help Figure Associated with Organized Crime

LOS ANGELES – A former special agent with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) was sentenced today to 121 months in federal prison for accepting cash payments and other benefits to help an organized crime-linked person, including taking official action designed to help two foreign nationals gain entry into the United States.

Felix Cisneros Jr., 48, of Murrieta, was sentenced by United States District Judge R. Gary Klausner, who also ordered him to pay a fine of \$30,000. Judge Klausner also entered a forfeiture order of \$133,000 against Cisneros.

On May 3, at the conclusion of a five-day trial, a federal jury found Cisneros guilty of 30 felonies: one count of conspiracy to commit bribery of a public official, one count of bribery, 26 counts of money laundering and two counts of subscribing to a false tax return. Cisneros been in federal custody since the trial's conclusion.

Over an 18-month period that started in September 2015, Cisneros accepted cash, checks, private jet travel, luxury hotel stays, meals and other items of value from a person identified in court documents as "Individual 1," who was associated with a criminal organization. Cisneros received approximately \$100,000 in checks and gifts from Individual 1 in 2015 and 2016.

Cisneros accepted the cash and other bribes while employed as a special agent with HSI, which is an agency within the United States Department of Homeland Security. In exchange for the bribes, Cisneros performed a series of official acts at the behest of Individual 1, including:

- Accessing a DHS database for information about a German national identified as W.R., and telling Individual 1 he removed a "hit" on W.R., "thus indicating derogatory information had been removed";
- Placing an alert in a law enforcement database for an address associated with an illegal marijuana grow operation so Cisneros could learn of law enforcement interest and warn Individual 1;
- Obtaining an official DHS letter signed by an HSI assistant special agent in charge to allow the parole of Individual 1's brother-in-law into the United States from Mexico, and later providing updates about the brother-in-law's asylum application; and

- Collecting information on an associate of Individual 1 whose home had been searched by law enforcement and later providing Individual 1 with information about the investigation.

Cisneros also underreported his total income on his federal income tax returns by at least \$20,000 for the year 2015 and at least \$73,404 for the year 2016.

The FBI, IRS Criminal Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General investigated this matter.

Assistant United States Attorneys Michael J. Morse and Juan M. Rodriguez of the General Crimes Section prosecuted this case.

Topic(s):

Public Corruption

Tax

Component(s):

USAO - California, Central

Contact:

Ciaran McEvoy

Public Information Officer

ciaran.mcevoy@usdoj.gov

(213) 894-4465

Press Release Number:

22-244

Updated November 21, 2022