

Federal officer charged with bribery and attempted importation of cocaine

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas

LAREDO, Texas – A 35-year-old Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer working at the Port of Entry in Laredo has been arrested, announced U.S. Attorney Alamdar S. Hamdani.

Emanuel Celedon is set to make his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Christopher dos Santos at 9:40 a.m.

The indictment, returned Nov. 28, charges him with two counts of bribery and witnesses and two counts of attempted importation of cocaine.

The charges allege that from Oct. 1-17, Celedon accepted U.S. currency in exchange for allowing an individual to transport a substance he believed to be several kilograms of cocaine into the United States from Mexico through the Laredo Port of Entry without inspection. Celedon allegedly accepted another bribe for the same conduct from on or about Oct. 23-30.

If convicted, Celedon faces up to 15 years in prison as well as a possible \$250,000 maximum fine for the bribery allegations, while the attempted importation of cocaine charges carry a mandatory minimum of five and up to 40 years in prison and up to a \$5 million fine.

Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Administration and CBP - Office of Professional Responsibility conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Richard W. Bennett and Jennifer Day are prosecuting the case.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. A defendant is presumed innocent unless convicted through due process of law.