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CORRECTION

IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE SCAM INCLUDED IMPERSONATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

CARSON CITY, NV: The Office of the Nevada Attorney General, in cooperation with State and Federal authorities, today arrested three people in connection with a nationwide immigration scam that entailed impersonating Federal employees of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS).

The criminal complaint alleges a company, Telestaffing, located at 610 Plumb Lane, Reno, deceived persons into believing they were employees of USCIS and were able to assist them in obtaining and completing immigration forms and filing them with USCIS. The group used a fee schedule which was identical to the fees posted by USCIS. Delays in the processing of customer immigration papers caused some to lose their legal status.

Charles Doucette, Deborah Stilson and Cybil Duran Berti have been arrested and charged with six counts of Obtaining Money Under False Pretenses in the Course of a Technological Crime, six counts of Conspiracy and two counts of Criminal Racketeering.

"These egregious actions by scammers who impersonate Federal employees and prey on innocent people who are trying to work within the system to achieve citizenship is particularly distressing," said Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto.

"The original reports that led to this investigation and today's arrests were called in by concerned citizens to ICE's toll-free tip line," said John Budrewicz, acting resident agent in charge for U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations in Reno. "As is so often the case, the people who ended up being victimized by these defendants were trying to do the right thing and abide by the law. Instead, they ended up being duped. This enforcement action should send a message about our collective resolve to seek justice for those who prey on the well intentioned and the vulnerable."

Telestaffing, which was doing business under several names including Immigration Forms, Immigration Forms Processing Center, Immigration Forms And Services, Immigration Forms and

Documents, USA-Helpline.Info, and Immigration Helpline, duplicated electronic checks for its services without authority, resulting in a double payment for the filing. Consumers who paid by money order or by other means found the defendants either refused to file the documents with USCIS or simply did nothing and kept the money.

The Office of the Nevada Attorney General received cooperation on this action from the Better Business Bureau of Northern Nevada, the Washoe County Sheriff's Department, the City of Reno, the Reno Police Department, the Colorado Attorney General, the Missouri Attorney General, the U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, the Federal Trade Commission, and the United States Department of Justice, all who assisted in the investigation of this matter.

The filing of a criminal complaint or arrest is not a determination of guilt or innocence, but is a finding of probable cause by the Nevada Attorney General that a crime was committed. The defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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