



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois

John R. Lausch, Jr.
United States Attorney

Everett McKinley Dirksen United States Courthouse
219 South Dearborn Street, 5th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-5300

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 23, 2018

**SUBURBAN MAN INDICTED ON FEDERAL DRUG CHARGES
FOR ALLEGEDLY IMPORTING A FENTANYL ANALOGUE FROM CHINA**

CHICAGO — An Elmwood Park man has been charged with federal drug offenses for allegedly importing a fentanyl analogue from China to the Chicago area.

ROLANDO ESTRADA, 42, imported furanyl fentanyl from China in the summer of 2016, according to an indictment returned this week in federal court in Chicago. Estrada arranged to have the substances shipped to the Chicago area from a Chinese chemical company, according to a criminal complaint filed against him in 2016. In June 2016, law enforcement agents intercepted and seized two packages from China that contained approximately four kilograms of furanyl fentanyl, the complaint states. The following month, authorities seized more than five kilograms of cocaine and \$90,000 in cash from Estrada's residence in Elmwood Park.

Estrada fled to Mexico in July 2016, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. He was taken into custody last month in Querétaro, Mexico.

The five-count indictment was returned Tuesday. It charges Estrada with two counts of distribution of a controlled substance, two counts of importing a controlled substance from outside the U.S., and one count of possession of a controlled substance with the intent to distribute. Arraignment is set for May 24, 2018, at 11:00 a.m., before U.S. Magistrate Judge Maria Valdez.

The arrest and indictment were announced by John R. Lausch, Jr., United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Brian M. McKnight, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago

Field Division of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration; Jeffrey S. Sallet, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and William Hedrick, Acting Inspector-in-Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Chicago. Substantial assistance was provided by the Downers Grove Police Department, Chicago Police Department, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Illinois State Police, and Berwyn Police Department. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Eric Pruitt and Matthew Kutcher.

The probe was conducted under the umbrella of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) Chicago Strike Force, a partnership between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The principal mission of OCDETF is to identify, disrupt and dismantle the most serious drug trafficking organizations.

According to a search warrant and affidavit previously filed in the case, Estrada continued to coordinate shipments of fentanyl to Chicago after fleeing to Mexico. The fentanyl was allegedly mixed with other substances before being sold to customers in the Chicago area. After the sales, Estrada allegedly directed an associate to convert some of the proceeds into Bitcoin, a virtual currency typically circulated via the internet. Estrada also allegedly instructed the associate on how to use a cellphone application to transfer Bitcoin to Estrada's virtual wallet.

The public is reminded that an indictment is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The charges against Estrada carry a maximum potential sentence of life in prison. If convicted, the Court must impose a reasonable sentence under federal statutes and the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines.

###