

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
EASTERN DISTRICT *of* NORTH CAROLINA

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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of North Carolina

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, August 24, 2018

## **Nineteen Foreign Nationals Charged for Voting in 2016 Election**

### ***Multiple Defendants Voted In More Than One Election***

WILMINGTON, NC – Robert J. Higdon, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina today announced that nineteen foreign nationals were charged with, among other crimes, voting by alien for their actions prior to and on November 8, 2016. A twentieth defendant was charged with aiding and abetting a fellow defendant in falsely claiming United States citizenship in order to register to vote.

A federal grand jury in Wilmington, North Carolina returned an Indictment charging the following foreign nationals with false claim of United States citizenship in order to register to vote, and voting by an alien:

- Jose Cruz Solano-Rodriguez, age 41, of Mexico;
- Guadalupe Espinosa-Pena, age 63, of Mexico;
- Sarah Emilia Silverio-Polanco, age 35, of the Dominican Republic;
- Elizabeth Nene Amachaghi, age 44, of Nigeria;
- Maria Rufina Castillo-Boswell, age 31, of Philippines;
- Dora Maybe Damatta-Rodriguez, age 64, of Panama;
- Elvis David Fullerton, age 54, of Grenada;
- Olive Agatha Martin, age 71, of Guyana; and
- Kaoru Sauls, age 54, of Japan.

Separately, criminal charges of voting by an alien were filed against the following foreign nationals:

- Jose Jaime Ramiro-Torres, age 52, of El Salvador;
- Juan Francisco Landeros-Mireles, age 64, of Mexico;
- Alessandro Cannizzaro, age 46, of Italy;
- Dieudonne Soifils, age 71, of Haiti;
- Hyo Suk George, age 69, of Korea;
- Merius Jean, age 54, of Haiti;
- Rosemarie Angelika Harris, age 60, of Germany; and
- Daniel Tadeusz Romanowski, age 39, of Poland.

Also, a federal grand jury in Wilmington has returned an Indictment charging an eighteenth defendant, Diana

Patricia Franco-Rodriguez, age 26, of Mexico, with fraud and misuse of visas, permits, and other documents, and voting by an alien.

Additionally, a federal grand jury in Wilmington has returned an Indictment charging Denslo Allen Paige, age 66, with aiding and abetting Espinosa-Pena in falsely claiming United States citizenship in order to register to vote.

Separately on August 14, 2018, Ramon Esteban Paez-Jerez, age 58, of the Dominican Republic, was charged and pleaded guilty to a two-count Criminal Information charging him with passport fraud and voting by an alien.

According to the Criminal Information, Paez-Jerez in 1988 was ordered deported from the United States and failed to appear for his scheduled removal. According to court records, Paez-Jerez assumed a fraudulent identity and applied for amnesty. Paez-Jerez in 1989 was granted lawful permanent status under the false identity and in 1999 was naturalized contrary to law as a United States citizen. On July 7, 2007, Paez-Jerez registered to vote in North Carolina under his fraudulent identity.

On September 16, 2009, Paez-Jerez made a false statement in an application for a United States passport when he applied under the fraudulent identity and failed to disclose his real name.

On November 8, 2016, Paez-Jerez illegally voted in the General Election of 2016 in Wake County, North Carolina, knowing he had illegally obtained United States citizenship.

Paez-Jerez faces maximum penalties of eleven years' imprisonment, a \$350,000 fine, and a term of supervised release following any term of imprisonment. Sentencing is scheduled for the term of court commencing on December 11, 2018, in New Bern, North Carolina.

If convicted of false claim of United States citizenship in order to register to vote, and voting by an alien, Amachaghi, Castillo-Boswell, Damatta-Rodriguez, Espinosa-Pena, Fullerton, Martin, Sauls, Silverio-Polanco, and Solano-Rodriguez, would face maximum penalties of six years' imprisonment, a \$350,000 fine, and a term of supervised release following any term of imprisonment.

If convicted of voting by an alien, Cannizzaro, George, Harris, Jean, Landeros-Mireles, Ramiro-Torres, Romanowski, and Soifils would face maximum penalties of twelve months imprisonment, a \$100,000 fine, and a term of supervised release following any term of imprisonment.

If convicted of fraud and misuse of visas, permits, and other documents, and voting by an alien, Franco-Rodriguez would face maximum penalties of twenty-six years imprisonment, a \$350,000 fine, and a term of supervised release following any term of imprisonment.

If convicted of aiding and abetting in falsely claiming United States citizenship in order to register to vote, Denslo Allen Paige would face a maximum imprisonment term of five years, a \$250,000 fine, and a term of supervised release following any term of imprisonment.

The charges and allegations contained in the Indictments and Criminal Informations are merely accusations. An Indictment is a formal written accusation originating with the United States Attorney and issued by a Grand Jury against a party charged with a crime. A Criminal Information is a formal written accusation filed directly by the United States Attorney. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The cases are being investigated under the newly created framework of the Document and Benefit Fraud

Task Force (DBFTF) in the Eastern District of North Carolina lead by Immigration and Customs Enforcement - Homeland Security Investigations, and assisted by Enforcement Removal Operations, and the Department of State - Diplomatic Security Service. The investigation as to voting fraud is ongoing.

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**Topic(s):**

Immigration

**Component(s):**

USAO - North Carolina, Eastern

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