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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Arrests and Charges in Massive South Florida Drug Trafficking Takedown



Courtesy of the Office of the Attorney General

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.— Attorney General James Uthmeier today announced arrests in a major takedown of a drug trafficking ring operating in Palm Beach County. The investigation nicknamed “Operation Slow N Go,” uncovered large-scale trafficking of cocaine, fentanyl, xylazine, psilocybin, marijuana, methamphetamine, testosterone, alprazolam, and pharmaceutical pills. The operation resulted in five arrests, and the seizure of six handguns, several automatic rifles, 2,262 grams of narcotics, and 500 pharmaceutical pills.

“If anyone traffics dangerous drugs like fentanyl into Florida, expect our Office of Statewide Prosecution to throw the book at you,” **said Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “This case is further proof that Florida has the best sheriffs in the nation, and thanks to their partnership, we have fewer criminals on the street and less fentanyl in our communities.”

“This is a good message to everybody that with our collaborative efforts, if you vomit a crime we will catch you anywhere, inside or outside the state of Florida,” **said Martin County Sheriff John Budensiek**. “We have broken down the barriers of the jurisdictional boundaries to protect the residents of Florida. This case exemplifies our working relationship and our resolve to catch bad guys everywhere.”

“Those who choose to profit from addiction should know they cannot hide in our community,” **said Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw**. “We will aggressively pursue anyone trafficking fentanyl and other deadly substances. We remain committed to protecting our residents and holding drug traffickers accountable.”

“The baseline of any law enforcement agency is investigation. When you’re able to do that on a large scale — across multiple agencies — it takes specialized personnel to operate and maintain that level of work here,” **said Okeechobee County Sheriff Noel E. Stephen**. “Together, we’ve removed dangerous drugs, weapons, and people from our streets. We’re proud of the role we played, and we sincerely thank all of the partnering organizations for their support and commitment to this mission.”

“This unprecedented collaboration amongst these agencies is what helped remove these criminals from our streets,” **said West Palm Beach Police Department Assistant Chief Al Musco**. “This is a testament to what we can accomplish when we work together to protect our communities.”

The six-month long investigation was led by the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office Narcotics Division and Attorney General Uthmeier’s Office of Statewide Prosecution, with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office, and the West Palm Beach Police Department. Investigators discovered that two of the drug traffickers were selling drugs out of a local flea market in Palm Beach County, using the venue as a front to distribute narcotics throughout South Florida.

The drug trafficking ring operating throughout Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, Broward, Okeechobee, Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties in Florida, as well as Suffolk County, Virginia.

The defendants are currently charged as follows:

Gary Devon West
Conspiracy to commit racketeering
Trafficking in fentanyl
Conspiracy to traffic methamphetamine 28-200g
Conspiracy to traffic methamphetamine 28g-200g
Trafficking in methamphetamine 14-28g
Delivery of fentanyl
Delivery of methamphetamine
Delivery of methamphetamine
Delivery of fentanyl
Possession with intent to deliver fentanyl
Conspiracy to delivery of methamphetamine
Conspiracy to delivery of fentanyl

Unlawful use of a two-way communication device
Darryl “Unc” Butler
Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering
Unlawful use of a two-way communication device
Andres Chaves
Conspiracy to deliver Fentanyl
Delivery of Fentanyl
Unlawful use of a two-way communication device
James Thiele
Traffic in Methamphetamine 14 grams or more
Unlawful use of a two-way communication device
Robert Townsend
Traffic Methamphetamine 14 grams or more
Delivery of Schedule 2 controlled substance
Unlawful use of a two-way communication device

There are two with outstanding warrants and more arrests to come.

Senior Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Chris Olowin and Assistant Statewide Prosecutors Monique Wilson and Joshua Dockus will handle the case.

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