

Feb 12, 2026

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OFFICE OF THE
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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Charges Six in Organized Cargo Theft Ring Responsible for 33 Thefts, \$7.8 Million in Losses Across Florida



Courtesy of the Office of the Attorney General

ORLANDO, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier’s Office of Statewide Prosecution filed charges against Alayn Espinosa Lopez, Yerrison Perez, Yasser Mederos Garcia, Alexis Suarez Hernandez, Alejandro Valdes, and Arley Osmany Hernandez Relova for Grand Theft and Conspiracy to Commit Grand Theft stemming from an organized cargo theft operation. The group is responsible for at least 32 cargo theft incidents and a vessel theft across Orange, Broward, Polk, Osceola, St. Lucie, and Volusia counties, resulting in an estimated loss of nearly \$7.8 million.

“This organized criminal operation targeted Florida’s supply chain and caused nearly \$7.8 million in losses across our state,” **said Attorney General James Uthmeier.** “Thanks to the coordination between the Florida Highway Patrol, the Orlando Police Department, and our Office of Statewide Prosecution, this group was identified and dismantled. Now, they’ll answer for their

crimes in court.”

“This case highlights the strength of Florida’s law enforcement partnerships and our shared commitment to protecting Florida’s communities and economy, ” **said Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) Executive Director Dave Kerner**. “The Florida Highway Patrol will continue to work closely with the Attorney General’s Office and our local partners to ensure that organized theft rings are identified, dismantled, and held fully accountable under the law.”

“The men and women of the Florida Highway Patrol showed exceptional commitment throughout this investigation,” **said Florida Highway Patrol Colonel Gary Howze**. “I commend the Florida Highway Patrol’s Cargo Theft Task Force for their close coordination with the Orlando Police Department, Orange County Sheriff, Ocoee Police Department, St. Cloud Police Department, Polk County Sheriff, St. Lucie County Sheriff, Miami Dade Sheriff, and Daytona Beach Police Department. Their combined efforts were critical to identifying and dismantling this theft ring. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Orlando Office of Statewide Prosecution, whose work will help ensure these individuals are brought to justice.”

“This operation demonstrates what’s possible when agencies work together to hold criminal organizations accountable,” **said Orlando Police Chief Eric Smith**. “Organized cargo theft is not a victimless crime - it drives up costs for businesses and consumers alike. The Orlando Police Department is proud of its detectives, who played a key role in initiating this investigation and is thankful for our partners at FHP and the Attorney General’s office of statewide prosecution.”

The investigation began in May 2023 after a series of thefts involving unattended commercial semi-trailers loaded with high-value cargo were reported throughout the Orlando area and beyond. The thefts included shipments of retail merchandise, consumer electronics, copper wire, HVAC equipment, cooking oil and food products, energy drinks, wine and spirits, and other alcoholic beverages, all of which had entered the stream of interstate or intrastate commerce.

Investigators determined the defendants were part of a Major Theft Organization (MTO) that targeted parked semi-trailers in commercial areas, parking lots, and distribution corridors. After stealing the vehicles and cargo, members of the MTO would search for and disable GPS tracking devices to evade law enforcement, then transport the stolen property to South Florida, where it was sold to co-conspirators involved in the resale of stolen goods.

According to the Florida Highway Patrol Cargo Theft Unit, between May 2023 and March 2025, the MTO is responsible for the theft of approximately 51 commercial motor vehicles and 28 cargo shipments.

This case was investigated by the Florida Highway Patrol, the Orlando Police Department, and the Office of Statewide Prosecution. All six defendants were arrested and are currently in custody.

The defendants face a combined maximum penalty of 300 years in the Florida Department of Corrections.

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