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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Heroin Trafficker Sentenced to 15 Years in Prison

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—The Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution secured a 15-year prison sentence for a man trafficking heroin in Florida. Jose Albino Rodriguez, 44, pleaded guilty to trafficking in heroin and conspiracy to traffic in heroin. The Honorable Judge Christopher Sabella Friday sentenced Rodriguez to 15 years in Florida State Prison.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Every day Florida loses 17 people to the opioid crisis, and we must continue fighting to keep heroin and other deadly drugs off our streets. As Attorney General, I will work tirelessly with our great law enforcement partners to stop the flow of opioids into our state. I want to thank our local and federal law enforcement partners for their great investigative work on this case and for helping us put another heroin trafficker behind bars."

On Sept. 27, 2013, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Deputies captured and arrested Rodriguez for possession of more than 100 grams of heroin. The arrest followed an investigation by the Department of Homeland Security Investigations, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, the Tampa Police Department and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

A day earlier, the Lakeland Police Department arrested a co-defendant of Rodriguez, Angel Bermudez, for trafficking more than 100 grams of heroin. Post-arrest, Bermudez assisted law enforcement in the investigation of the co-defendant's heroin supplier, Luis Bonilla. Authorities eventually arrested Bonilla and executed a search warrant. Bonilla assisted in the investigation naming Rodriguez as the main heroin supplier.

On the day of Rodriguez's capture, Bonilla made three controlled phone calls to the defendant. Bonilla requested that Rodriguez deliver heroin to Bonilla's apartment. Law enforcement intercepted Rodriguez and the defendant's girlfriend at the apartment. After being arrested, Rodriguez made incriminating statements. Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Joseph Ravelo handled this case.