

19 Arrested In Liberal During Kansas ICE Operation

As part of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) ongoing efforts to focus agency resources on the removal of criminal aliens and egregious immigration law violators, 19 convicted criminal aliens, immigration fugitives and other immigration violators were arrested during an operation carried out last week.

The three-day operation, which concluded Thursday, was conducted by ICE's Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) as part of the agency's commitment to prioritize the removal of criminal aliens and egregious immigration violators.

Of the individuals taken into custody, 18 were criminal aliens whose convictions include: drug trafficking, drug manufacturing, aggravated assault, burglary, domestic assault, driving under the influence and illegal re-entry after deportation. The group also included five immigration fugitives who had outstanding orders of deportation and four previously deported aliens. All of these arrests were made in Liberal, Kan.

Those arrested in Liberal, Kan., during the operation include:

- A previously deported 29-year-old Mexican national with convictions for drug trafficking, theft and illegal re-entry after deportation. He was arrested March 26 and is pending prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for felony re-entry.
- A previously deported 43-year-old Mexican national with convictions for burglary, driving under the influence and illegal re-entry after deportation. He was arrested March 27 and is pending prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for felony re-entry.

"ERO strives to make our communities safer by arresting and removing convicted criminal aliens," said Ricardo Wong, field officer director for ERO Chicago. "By focusing our resources on the most egregious offenders, we immediately improve public safety in that area."

Following is the nationality breakdown of the 17 men and two women arrested: Mexico (11), Guatemala (7) and Honduras (1).

ERO Chicago received significant assistance during the operation from the Liberal Police Department and Seward County (Kan.) Sheriff's Department.

In fiscal year 2013, ICE conducted 368,644 [removals](#) nationwide. Eighty-two percent of individuals removed from the interior of the United States had previously been convicted of a criminal offense.

ICE is focused on smart, effective immigration enforcement that targets serious criminal aliens who present the greatest risk to the security of our communities, such as those charged with or convicted of homicide, rape, robbery, kidnapping, major drug offenses and threats to national security. ICE also prioritizes the arrest and removal of immigration fugitives or criminal aliens who have been previously deported and illegally re-entered the country.

ICE Press Release