



**Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York**  
Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

**For Immediate Release**  
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## Queens Man Indicted in Connection with Seizure of Approximately \$300,000 in Cocaine during Citywide Drug Trafficking Investigation

*Labels on cocaine packages included a photo of President Joe Biden, a photo of a cat and the letters "AMG"*

An indictment filed by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor charges REYNALDO ALMONTE in connection with the seizure of approximately 6 kilograms of cocaine (over 13 pounds) and more than \$50,000 cash from his burgundy Nissan sports car. ALMONTE was arrested after law enforcement tracked his vehicle from Queens to the Bronx on November 28, 2022.

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Frank A. Tarentino III, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) New York Division, and Terrance Raynor, Westchester County Police Commissioner, announced the arrest and indictment today as ALMONTE appeared for arraignment in Manhattan Supreme Court. The indictment contains charges of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees.

The charges are the result of a short-term investigation conducted by DEA New York Division's Westchester Resident Office (WRO), Group D-42, which is composed of agents and officers with the DEA, the Westchester County Police Department, the Yonkers Police Department, the New Rochelle Police Department, the Mt. Vernon Police Department, the White Plains Police Department, the Port Chester Police Department and the Harrison Police Department.

**Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan** said, "Cocaine continues to be significant factor in overdose deaths in New York City. Cocaine has always posed significant health risks, but it is now commonly mixed with fentanyl, methamphetamine and other deadly substances, increasing risks to users. Taking thirteen pounds of cocaine off of our streets will save precious lives."

"Similar to business marketing, drug traffickers brand their deadly product in various ways using hot topic photos, logos, or stamps referencing pop culture and current events," said **DEA Special Agent in Charge Frank Tarentino**. "These six kilograms would be repackaged into thousands of baggies sold on our New York City streets. DEA saves lives every single day with seizures like this which prevented traffickers from mixing and selling a deadly fentanyl and cocaine cocktail."

**Westchester County Police Commissioner Terrance Raynor** said, “Joint investigations with federal and local partners are one of the most effective tools we can use to take illegal narcotics off our streets. By sharing resources and working collaboratively, we can make our communities safer for all.”

On November 28, 2022, at approximately 6:22 pm, members of DEA WRO Group D-42 were conducting surveillance near the intersection of Seneca Avenue and George Street in Ridgewood, Queens and allegedly observed ALMONTE enter the driver's seat of the burgundy Nissan carrying what appeared to be a weighed shopping bag. The vehicle bore a New Jersey license plate registered in ALMONTE's name. Agents and officers allegedly watched as ALMONTE reached into the rear cabin of the Nissan and appeared to be moving objects around.

Members of Group D-42 then followed as ALMONTE drove off and travelled to the vicinity of East 178th Street and Daly Avenue in the West Farms neighborhood of the Bronx, where he double-parked at approximately 7:45 p.m. Agents and officers approached the car, finding ALMONTE in the driver's seat, and a bag on the floor in the front passenger area. The bag later proved to contain approximately over \$50,000 cash.

ALMONTE and his vehicle were transported to DEA New York Division's Westchester Resident Office. At approximately 9:15 p.m. on November 28, 2022, members of Group D-42, with assistance from a K-9 unit, searched ALMONTE's vehicle and found a hidden trap compartment in the rear passenger cabin. Within the hidden trap were six kilogram-sized packages wrapped in plastic, along with approximately \$7,000 cash. One of the packages bore a photo of President Joe Biden. Labels on other packages included a photo of a cat and the letters “AMG.”

Preliminary field-testing indicated the packages contained cocaine. DEA estimates the street value of the cocaine to be approximately \$300,000.

ALMONTE was released on a \$300,000 partially secured bail bond on December 8, 2022. Terms of the bail required that 10 percent of the total bail bond amount be posted.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, and commended SNP's Trial Division and Special Investigations Bureau, DEA New York Division's Westchester Resident Office, the Westchester County Police Department, and all of the members of Group D-42 for their work on the investigation.

<b>Defendant</b>	<b>Charges</b>
Reynaldo Almonte	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> - 1 ct
Queens, NY	CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> -1 ct
Age: 29	

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.