



Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York

Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

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Contacts:

Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office
Kati Cornell
(212) 815-0525

DEA New York Division
Erin Mulvey
(212) 337-2906

Approximately 300,000 Fentanyl Pills and Five Kilograms of Powdered Fentanyl Recovered from Vehicle's Gas Tank

A short-term investigation into fentanyl trafficking in New York City resulted in the seizure of approximately 300,000 fake oxycodone pills containing fentanyl, plus five kilograms of powdered fentanyl (over 11 pounds), from a red Ford Expedition stopped in the Bronx. The fentanyl was discovered inside the gas tank of the vehicle, and carries an estimated street value of approximately \$5 million.

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark, and Frank A. Tarentino III, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) New York Division (NY), announced the arrest of ENRIQUE PEREZ, a resident of Columbus, Ohio, following an investigation by DEA New York Division, Group D-41. The New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force (NYOCDES) and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) assisted with the investigation.

A criminal complaint filed by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor (SNP) charges PEREZ with Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees. PEREZ was arrested on Sunday, April 30, 2023, and arraigned the evening of Monday, May 1, 2023 in Manhattan Criminal Court, where bail was set at \$200,000 cash/bond with a 72-hour surety and geolocation monitoring.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan said, "At a time when our city's overdose rates are at a record high, the discovery of more than eleven pounds of powdered fentanyl and hundreds of thousands of fentanyl pills manufactured to look like prescription pills, concealed in the gas tank of a truck near the Bronx Court House, is truly alarming. We will continue to work with our partners to seize deadly drugs before they ever hit the streets."

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark said, "Thanks to this investigation, hundreds of thousands of dangerous pills were taken off the streets of the Bronx. These fake oxycodone pills containing fentanyl would have ruined so many lives and would have likely killed many. This seizure happened during a car stop near my office, courts, and a busy commercial area. I commend the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office and their law enforcement partners for this investigation. These lethal drugs have no place in our communities."

DEA Special Agent in Charge Frank Tarentino said, "This seizure demonstrates one of the many ways evil drug cartels, like the Sinaloa cartel, smuggle fentanyl from Mexico to major cities like New York for street distribution. While we hit the accelerator on our enforcement efforts, the cartels go to extremes to conceal illicit drugs in implausible spots, like the gas tank of a vehicle. I commend our law

enforcement partners who are working with us to target drug traffickers and cartels who inflict the most harm to our communities.”

On April 30, 2023, at approximately 1:39 p.m., members of DEA NY, Group D-41, were conducting surveillance as part of the short-term investigation when they stopped the Ford Expedition in front of 295 East 161st Street. PEREZ was allegedly driving the vehicle, which bore a Texas license plate.

An NYPD K9 alerted to the presence of narcotics in the vehicle, but agents and officers were unable to identify the precise location. An inspection of PEREZ’s phone allegedly revealed photographs of bundles of cash and what appeared to be a hidden access to the Ford Expedition’s gas tank from inside of the vehicle. Agents discovered the gas tank was accessible from the rear floor area. Approximately 300,000 blue fake oxycodone pills containing fentanyl and five kilograms of powdered fentanyl were contained in vacuum sealed packages, and submerged in the vehicle’s gas tank.

The fentanyl seized from the Ford Expedition is believed to have originated in Mexico. The investigation revealed that the vehicle has crossed the U.S.-Mexico border multiple times.

This case fits a trafficking pattern observed in recent months: defendants who reside out-of-state transport large quantities of fentanyl pills and powder together for distribution in New York City; vehicles used bear out-of-state license plates, not necessarily from the state of residence; and loads of narcotics are worth a million dollars or more.

The results of DEA laboratory analysis on the narcotics seized are pending.

Special Prosecutor Brennan thanked Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and commended SNP’s Special Investigations Bureau, DEA New York Division, the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, and the New York City Police Department for their work on the investigation.

Defendant	Charges
Enrique Perez	CPCS 1 st – 1 ct
Columbus, Ohio	CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Age: 44	

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