

## ICE Focusing on Identity Theft Committed by Illegal Aliens

July 26, 2018 - Immigration and Customs Enforcement is placing a bulls-eye on anyone in the country illegally and engaged in what they call "document fraud." That term is just another way of saying identity theft. The agency has setup task forces in 27 American cities and in the past few months served 19 audit notifications to 5,900 businesses. Their goals are to force employers to comply with employment law, reduce payouts for fraudulent government benefit claims and put a large dent in the number of Americans who experience the pleasure of becoming identity theft victims.

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The Department of Homeland Security has established a special unit to focus on document fraud. The unit is called the Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force. On Thursday, Attorney General Jeff Sessions and the Attorney General of Massachusetts, Andrew Lelling, announced the first large scale arrests as a result of the task force's work.

Dubbed Operation Double Trouble, the ICE agents arrested 25 people in Boston on charges that include theft of public funds and aggravated identity theft. 21 of those arrested are in the United States illegally. And four of the people arrested were wanted on other charges which include rape. One of the suspects had been serving a 40 year sentence for murder but he had escaped from a prison in Puerto Rico in 1994 and has been on the run ever since.

At the same time, ICE is auditing employers for illegal hiring at a rapid pace; a practice that also leads to identity theft. The agency is auditing thousands of businesses to ensure they are in compliance with US labor laws. Acting Executive Director for ICE's Homeland Security Investigations Unit said, "This is not a victimless crime. Unauthorized workers often use stolen identities of legal U.S. workers, which can significantly impact the identity theft victim's credit, medical records and other aspects of their everyday life."

The agency is being aggressive with business owners and managers. Those found to be in violation of the law can find themselves criminally charged and facing crippling fines. As a result of this enforcement action, the agency has made 93 arrests so far, and more are expected.

Over the years we have noted on more than one occasion that there has been a double standard when it comes to enforcing identity theft laws. Americans who commit this crime have been charged, convicted and sent to jail, while courts and law enforcement have often looked the other way when illegal aliens commit the same crime. This type of a crack-down is long overdue.

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