



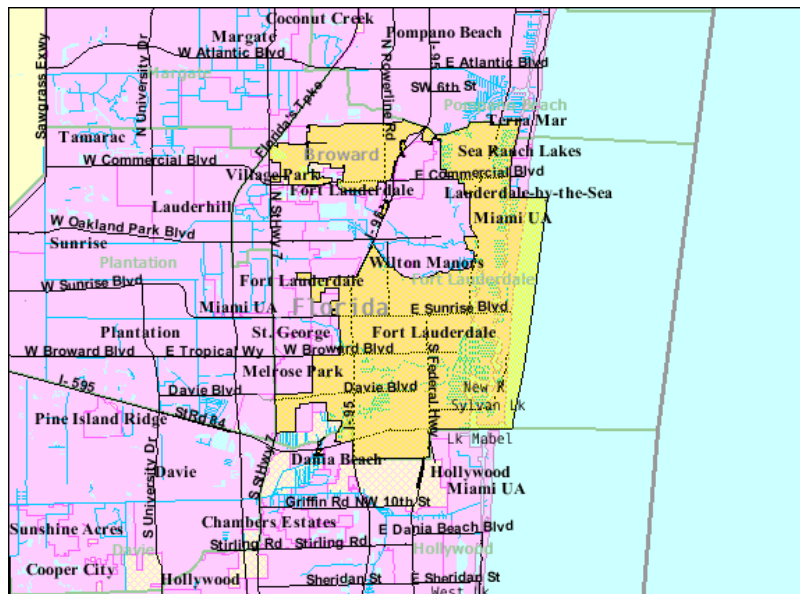
Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on May 3, 2011

Nearly Two Dozen Charged In Fake License Scheme

Federal authorities in Florida have charged 18 people in connection with a scam to provide illegal immigrants with fake driver's licenses.

Three employees of the Sunshine State's department of motor vehicles are in jail, along with a middleman and more than dozen recipients of the phony licenses.

And the charges in Florida are merely a small microcosm of the document fraud illegal aliens and their helpers perpetrate across the country.



The Case in Florida

All the defendants face federal charges, according to a release from the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District. The ringleader appears to have been 50-year-old Rolin Pierre. [According to the Sun Sentinel](#), Pierre is a convicted felon.

The office of Wifredo Ferrer [announced Monday's indictments](#) in federal court in Fort Lauderdale:

[T]hree indictments charge that defendant Pierre conspired with ... examiners at three different Broward County offices of the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, to produce and transfer valid Florida driver's licenses without lawful authority, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028(f). The indictments also charge each of these defendants with having produced Florida driver's licenses without lawful authority.

As well, [Ferrer's office says](#), if convicted, the defendants face 15 years in the slammer plus fines and possibly three years of supervised release.

[According to](#) the release, in addition to indictments charging Pierre and his three coconspirators in the DMV, "fourteen separate indictments charge fourteen individuals who obtained Florida driver's licenses from Pierre and his co-conspirators, using fraudulent immigration documents to support their license applications."

Across the County

Obtaining phony driver's licenses is big business in America.

In February, federal officials nailed a fake ID ring based in Mexico that operated in 19 cities across 11 states. Authorities believe it produced 15,000 phony documents before being stopped. But it also produced many other crimes, including murder and racketeering.

As [CBS reported](#) at the time, the ring was a major crime operation:

The defendants, who are being held in Virginia, are accused of 12 counts, including racketeering, murder, assault, firearms possession, kidnapping, money laundering, and possessing and producing false documents. Most are illegal immigrants from Mexico.

The Mexico-based ring operated in 19 U.S. cities and generated more than \$1 million over less



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than two years selling Social Security cards, driver's licenses and work documents at prices ranging from \$150 to \$200, according to an indictment.

The U.S. Attorney who announced the arrest noted that the organization was no "mom-and-pop" outfit, but one devoted to eliminating its rivals with murderous dispatch. [Said Neil MacBride](#), "The indictment portrays a deadly criminal organization that uses brutal force to eliminate rivals, protect its turf and enforce discipline against its own members."

In other words, selling phony identification is a dangerous business.

Another DMV Case

Such arrests are quotidian routine for state as well as federal officials, and the case in Florida isn't the first wherein DMV officials have been nailed for cooperating with document forgers.

Two years ago, federal authorities convicted seven defendants in a document fraud case similar to the one in Florida. In that one, one defendant of eight [was acquitted](#). She worked for the Ohio DMV [and testified](#) that because department policy prohibited her from checking into license applications with Hispanic names, she could not question the 700 phony licenses and other documents the ring obtained from Ohio.

The feds ended the phony ID ring's operation when they arrested three employees at a Cargill poultry plant in Dayton, Virginia, near Harrisonburg.

Map of Fort Lauderdale area:



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