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# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Man indicted for armed bank robbery**

A 32-year-old man was indicted yesterday in federal court in connection with the Dec. 21, 2007, bank robbery of a TCF Bank in Blaine.

Jose Leonidas Avalos, unknown address, was charged with one count of armed bank robbery June 9 in Minneapolis. His indictment alleges that on Dec. 21 Avalos did by force, violence and intimidation took approximately \$1,200 from the TCF Bank, and in committing the offense, did assault and put in jeopardy the life of another person by the use of a dangerous weapon.

According to a Federal Bureau of Investigation affidavit, the robber entered the bank, located at 331 NE County Road 10, at approximately 2 p.m. He approached a teller and handed her a note stating, "I need everything money in the bag."

The teller complied and began removing cash from her drawer. As she did so, she saw that the robber was pointing a large, black handgun at her. At the same time, the robber told her, "I want all of it." The robber threw the cash into a black bag, fled the bank on foot and left the demand note behind on the counter.

Approximately 20 minutes before the bank robbery occurred, at 1:40 p.m., an armed carjacking occurred at the Target store, located at 755 53rd Ave. in Fridley. The carjacking suspect approached the victim, who was buckling her kids into a sport utility vehicle, pointed a black handgun at her and demanded the vehicle. The victim complied, removed her children, and gave the vehicle to the suspect.

Authorities discovered that the physical descriptions of the carjacking suspect and bank robbery suspect matched. The store's surveillance video recorded the carjacking incident, and recorded the suspect exiting a red pickup truck prior to the carjacking.

Police executed a search warrant on the pickup and recovered a Republic of El Salvador passport in the name of Avalos. Officers also recovered a notebook with a page ripped in half.

Authorities later recovered the stolen SUV that day, and recovered an exploded dye pack, dye-stained currency, clothing and a black nylon bag. All of the items appeared to have been the same used by the bank robber. Police also recovered a piece of notebook paper that was torn in half, which appeared to have been the other half of the torn sheet of paper from the notebook recovered from the pickup truck.

If convicted, Avalos faces a potential maximum penalty of 25 years in prison. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the FBI, the police departments of Blaine and Fridley and Target security. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Erika R. Mozangue.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.