



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Robert Pitman, U.S. Attorney

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**FEDERAL GRAND JURY INDICTS CAMERON COUNTY AND DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ARMANDO VILLALOBOS AND ATTORNEY EDUARDO "EDDIE" LUCIO
IN CONNECTION WITH A BRIBERY AND EXTORTION SCHEME**

Charges include Conspiracy, RICO, Bribery, Extortion and Honest Services Fraud

Western District of Texas United States Attorney Robert Pitman and FBI Special Agent in Charge Armando Fernandez, San Antonio Division, announced the arrests of, and a federal grand jury indictment charging, Cameron County and District Attorney Armando Villalobos and attorney Eduardo "Eddie" Lucio in connection with a bribery and extortion scheme.

The 12-count indictment, returned this morning by a federal grand jury in Brownsville, Texas, charges the defendants with one count of violating the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act and one count of conspiracy to violate the RICO Act. In addition, Villalobos is charged with seven counts of extortion and three counts of honest services fraud; Lucio, three counts of extortion and two counts of honest services fraud.

According to the indictment, from October 2, 2006, through May 3, 2012, the defendants were involved in a scheme to illegally generate income for themselves and others through a pattern of bribery and extortion, favoritism, improper influence, personal self-enrichment, self dealing, concealment and conflict of interest. The indictment alleges that Villalobos solicited and accepted over \$100,000 in bribes and kickbacks in the form of cash and campaign contributions from Lucio and others in return for favorable acts of prosecutorial discretion, including minimizing charging decisions, pretrial diversion agreements, agreements on probationary matters and case dismissals. The indictment also alleges that Villalobos solicited and arranged for private counsel, including Lucio, to handle civil and forfeiture matters associated with criminal matters pending in the Office of the District and County Attorney of Cameron County. The indictment further alleges that while serving as County and District Attorney for Cameron County, Villalobos used his executive authority as well as County property and employees to further the illicit affairs of the criminal enterprise.

Upon conviction, Villalobos and Lucio face up to 20 years in federal prison per count.

It is important to note that a criminal complaint is merely a charge and should not be considered as evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation and the Brownsville Police Department. Southern District of Texas Assistant United States Attorney Michael Wynne and Western District of Texas Assistant United States Attorney Greg Surovic are prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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