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6 Attorneys for Plaintiff
7 United States of America

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
9 SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

11 Plaintiff,

12 v.

13 \$9,000.00 IN U.S. CURRENCY,

14 Defendant.

Case No. '15CV0004 JAH DHB

COMPLAINT FOR
FORFEITURE

15
16 By way of complaint against the defendant, \$9,000.00 in U.S. Currency
17 (hereinafter "defendant currency"), the United States of America alleges:

18 1. This Court has jurisdiction over this action by virtue of the provisions of
19 Title 28, United States Code, § 1355, and Title 21, United States Code, § 881.

20 2. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to Title 28, United States Code,
21 § 1395, because the defendant currency was found within this district.

22 3. On July 21, 2014, San Diego Sheriff Department deputies conducted a
23 traffic stop on a 2003 Ford Focus for a non-operating brake light and dark window tint at
24 1924 West Drive, Vista, California. Adrian Lopez, an unlicensed driver, was the driver
25 and sole occupant of the vehicle.

26 4. The vehicle had a single key in the ignition and a second set of keys in the
27 car's door, which is a tactic commonly utilized by drivers of "load vehicles". The air
28 vents in the dashboard were different colors and the center console appeared to be askew.

1 Lopez appeared to be very nervous and had religious cards, which included Mexican
2 religious saints associated with narcotics trafficking, in his wallet. Lopez's wallet also
3 contained a handwritten prayer which referenced Santa Muerte, a narcotic
4 trafficking saint.

5 5. A canine, trained in the detection of the odor of controlled substances to
6 alert to the presence of a controlled substance, conducted a sniff around the outside of the
7 vehicle and gave a positive alert. The canine also positively alerted to the console and
8 the back seat seam adjacent to the trunk of the vehicle.

9 6. An inspection of the console revealed that screws had been removed and that
10 the console was loose. In the engine compartment, the screws on the air filter box were
11 partially removed and the battery box and fuse box fittings appeared to have been moved
12 and loosened, consistent with the secretion of narcotics.

13 7. A backpack with padlocked zippers was found in the trunk of the vehicle.
14 Lopez said that the backpack belonged to him. A key from the set found in the car door
15 unlocked the padlocks. Inside the backpack was a plastic bag containing \$9,000.00 in
16 U.S. currency. The currency was wrapped in a skull and crossbones designed bandana
17 that was inside of a sock that was inside the plastic bag.

18 8. The inoperative taillight had loose bolts. Further inspection revealed that the
19 rear bumper had been hollowed out and did not contain the usual foam.

20 9. The currency was taken to the Sheriff's Station. The narcotics canine was
21 taken to a cleared office and did not provide a positive alert. The currency was placed
22 inside the office in a paper bag along with three other empty paper bags. The canine
23 alerted to the paper bag containing the currency, but did not alert to the other three empty
24 paper bags.

25 10. Narcotics detectives formed the opinion, based on their training and
26 experience, that the defendant currency represents the proceeds from the sale and
27 distribution of controlled substances.

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1 11. On and/or prior to July 21, 2014, the defendant currency represented the
2 proceeds of or proceeds traceable to an exchange for a controlled substance or listed
3 chemical in violation of Title 21, United States Code, § 881.

4 12. Alternatively, on and/or prior to July 21, 2014, the defendant currency was
5 used or was intended to be used to facilitate a violation of Title 21, United States Code,
6 § 881.

7 13. Because of the aforementioned acts or uses alleged herein, either singly or in
8 combination, the defendant currency is subject to forfeiture pursuant to Title 21,
9 United States Code, § 881(a)(6).

10 14. The defendant currency is presently stored within the jurisdiction of
11 this Court.

12 WHEREFORE, the United States prays that due process issue to enforce the
13 forfeiture of the defendant currency, and that due notice be given to all interested parties
14 to appear and show cause why said forfeiture should not be declared.

15 DATED: January 2, 2015

16 LAURA E. DUFFY
17 United States Attorney

18 s/ Michael P. Running, Jr.
19 MICHAEL P. RUNNING, JR.
20 Special Assistant U.S. Attorney
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VERIFICATION

I, Nancy Zuniga Ryan, hereby state and declare as follows:

1. I am a Task Force Officer with the Drug Enforcement Administration.

2. I have read the foregoing complaint and know its contents.

3. The information in the complaint was furnished by official Government sources. Based on this information, I believe the allegations in the complaint to be true.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Executed on January 2, 2015.



NANCY ZUNIGA RYAN
Task Force Officer
Drug Enforcement Administration

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