



***NEWS RELEASE*** –

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**GRAND JURY INDICTS 25 IN ALLGED AREA HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE THEFTS  
CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE**

**Multiple Agencies Collaborate in Investigation and Roundup**

A Denver Grand Jury has returned a 27-count indictment against 25 people in connection with a criminal enterprise involving the theft of over \$35,000 of merchandise from Denver metro area/Front Range home improvement stores.

The indictment is the result of a months-long investigation and collaboration by the Denver District Attorney's Economic Crime Unit, Denver Metro Gang Task Force, Denver Police Department, Aurora Police Department, and the Lakewood Police Department. The Denver Sheriff's Department assisted with the apprehension of several of the defendant, which took place last week.

Alleged ringleader **Christopher Rodriguez** (dob: 07-16-1986) is charged with one count of violation of the *Colorado Organized Crime Control Act-COCCA* (F2). He and the other 24 co-defendants are additionally variously charged with other felonies, including *money laundering* (F3), *theft* (F4, F6 and M1), and *violation of bail bond conditions* (F6). The indictment was handed down October 11, 2017.

The indictment alleges that between December 2015 and December 2016, Rodriguez participated in and directed fellow members of the criminal enterprise in stealing merchandise from Home Depot and Lowe's stores, then returning the stolen items back to the stores for merchandise credit cards, which were in turn sold for cash to pay enterprise members in cash or drugs. Rodriguez allegedly provided room and board in Denver for some members of the enterprise and bonded associates out of jail and compelled them to work for him until they could repay the bond fee. The merchandise cards were sold at stores specializing in gift cards for about 70% of the merchandise credit card value.

At the time of many of the alleged incidents, Rodriguez was on bond under intensive supervision with electronic monitoring in connection with pending criminal cases against him. Co-defendant Ginia Bobian was also on bond at the time of many of the alleged incidents and under intensive supervision with electronic monitoring in connection with pending criminal cases against her. Their electronic monitoring devices placed them at the scene of Home Depot and Lowe's stores for which they are charged in the indictment.

18 of the defendants were arrested or in custody and seven remain at-large. First appearances in Denver District Court have not yet been scheduled.