



PRESS RELEASE

Colorado Department of Law
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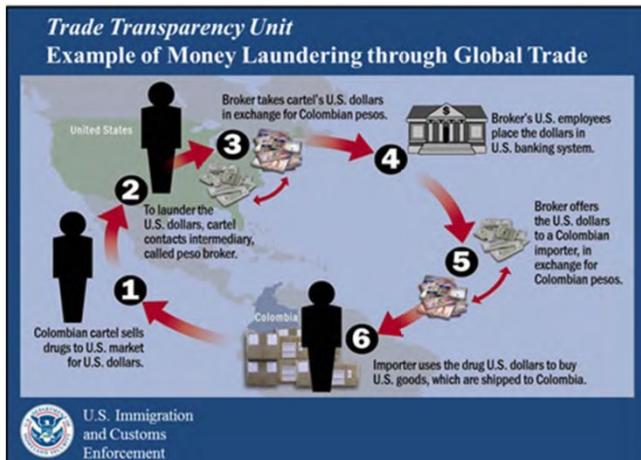
Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman Partners with Mexican and Western State Attorneys General to Fight Human Trafficking and Money Laundering on Both Sides of the Border

DENVER – Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman and prosecutors from the Colorado Department of Law continue to combat crime traveling into our state by way of Colorado’s interstate highways. Attorney General Coffman recently attended the International Border Conference in Phoenix, Arizona to work with her counterparts to address human and drug trafficking and money laundering on both sides of the border.

More international criminals are looking to Colorado to use the legalization of marijuana as a cover for other criminal activity. With Colorado being the closest state to Mexico with legalized marijuana, Attorney General Coffman is working to ensure that Colorado is a leader in the cooperative efforts between the two countries to put an end to these illegal enterprises.

“Cooperation and coordination among attorneys general from Mexico and the western United States is key to stopping sex and labor trafficking at the country’s borders,” said Attorney General Coffman. “We know that money from criminal enterprises, including human trafficking and drug smuggling, is being laundered on both sides of the border. Sharing intelligence about the illegal money flow between our countries makes it much harder for criminals to hide their activity.”

Drug trafficking is a cash business generating an estimated \$64 billion annually from U.S. sales. Mexico is the primary source of supply for some drugs and a transit point for others.



Graphic provided by United States Treasury 2015 report concerning money laundering risk assessment and human trafficking.

Although there are no reliable estimates of how much money Mexican drug trafficking organizations earn overall (estimates range from \$6 billion to \$39 billion), for cocaine, Mexican suppliers are estimated to earn about 14 cents of every dollar spent by retail buyers in the United States. It is the thousands of low level drug dealers and distributors throughout the country who receive most of the drug proceeds.

In addition to money laundering, other criminal activity associated with the illegal drug trade includes human trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, financial fraud, illegal gambling, loan

sharking, prostitution, racketeering and other white collar crimes. Many times the criminal activity is consolidated with legitimate business interests. Attorney General Coffman plans to focus additional resources of her office to address this increased criminal activity.

“Colorado law enforcement continues to attack this huge problem, but we can only be a part of a larger, lasting solution. It will take Mexican officials working cooperatively with U.S. agencies to efficiently tackle these immense problems for both our nations,” said Criminal Investigator Jorge Duque from the Colorado Attorney General’s Foreign Prosecution Unit.

General Coffman and Investigator Jorge Duque recently attended the International Border Conference hosted by the Conference of Western Attorneys General Alliance Partnership and the Arizona Attorney General’s Office.

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