

Enforcer for New Bedford Latin Kings Chapter Sentenced to Seven Years in Prison for Racketeering Conspiracy

A former member of the New Bedford Chapter of the Massachusetts Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation (Latin Kings) was sentenced today on racketeering charges.

Jose Vasquez, a/k/a "King Fearless," 28, was sentenced by U.S. Senior District Court Judge Rya W. Zobel to seven years in prison and three years of supervised release. On July 29, 2021, Vasquez pleaded guilty to conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, more commonly referred to as RICO conspiracy.

The Latin Kings are a violent criminal enterprise comprised of thousands of members across the United States. The Latin Kings adhere to a national manifesto, employ an internal judiciary and use a sophisticated system of communication to maintain the hierarchy of the organization. As alleged in court documents, the gang uses drug distribution to generate revenue, and engages in violence against witnesses and rival gangs to further its influence and to protect its turf.

Vasquez served as the Enforcer for the New Bedford Latin Kings Chapter. In his role as Enforcer, Vasquez admitted to approving a "mission," which involved shooting a victim in June 2019. This victim was targeted for obtaining and selling drugs from a source that was not sanctioned by the Latin Kings. Vasquez also admitted to his participation in the shooting of two victims in May 2018. During that incident, multiple Latin Kings members chased the two victims to a vehicle, surrounded the vehicle and slashed their tires.

Another Latin Kings member then fired gunshots at the two victims striking them. Both victims fled in the vehicle and survived. Vasquez admitted that these victims were targeted because one of the victims had objected to Latin Kings members conducting drug transactions in the victim's driveway.

In December 2019, a federal grand jury returned an indictment alleging racketeering conspiracy, drug conspiracy and firearms charges against 62 leaders, members and associates of the Latin Kings. Vasquez is the 53rd defendant to be sentenced in the case.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; Commissioner Carol Mici of the Massachusetts Department of Correction; and New Bedford Police Chief Paul Oliveira made the announcement. Valuable assistance was also provided by the FBI North Shore Gang Task Force and the Bristol County and Suffolk County District Attorney's Offices. Assistant U.S. Attorney Philip A. Mallard of Rollins' Organized Crime & Gang Unit prosecuted the case.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.