



ERIK NASARENKO
District Attorney

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Approved: LOL
Date: Tuesday, May 17, 2022
Release No.: 22-060

Chileans Plead Guilty in Organized Retail Theft

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Esperanza Venejas (DOB 11/09/96), of Chile, and Hugo Perez Martinez (DOB 08/11/95), of Chile, both suspected members of a South American Theft Group, pled guilty to felony organized retail theft. Additionally, Martinez pled guilty to resisting arrest.

On April 15, 2022, at approximately 6:00 p.m., security at The Oaks shopping mall in Thousand Oaks was notified of four suspects trying to break into a parked vehicle. When security arrived on scene, the four suspects separated and fled the area on foot. Deputies from the Ventura County Sheriff's Office located and arrested a juvenile and Venejas. Meanwhile, Martinez returned to the parked vehicle, fled and was apprehended. In the lot near where the vehicle had been parked, a booster bag with approximately \$2,500 in stolen Macy's department store merchandise was found.

Sentencing for Venejas and Martinez is scheduled for June 14, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 12 of the Ventura County Superior Court. Venejas remains in custody on \$50,000 bail and Martinez remains in custody on \$100,000 bail.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 290 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.