



**ERIK NASARENKO**  
**District Attorney**

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**Defendants Sentenced to Jail for Skimmer Operation**

*VENTURA, California* – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Hakop Karayan (DOB 09/29/78), and Artour Hakobyan (DOB 12/17/83), both of Glendale, were sentenced to jail for their roles in a skimming operation. A skimming operation occurs when a “skimmer” device is used to obtain information from the magnetic strip of a victim’s credit or debit card. This can be done by placing a “skimmer” in a gas pump or on an ATM where the customer inserts their card. In this case, skimmed information was re-encoded on cards used by Karayan and Hakobyan to withdraw cash from the victims’ bank accounts.

On February 27, 2017, Karayan and Hakobyan were arrested at Wescom Credit Union in Simi Valley, after they made multiple trips to the credit union’s ATM. The Simi Valley Police Department (SVPD) seized cards which were re-encoded with information skimmed from victims’ credit and debit cards throughout California. In May 2017, Karayan and Hakobyan returned to Ventura County and were again observed making numerous trips to ATM machines at seven locations. During this investigation, SVPD seized \$44,920 from the Karayan and Hakobyan, which will be applied towards victim restitution.

Hakobyan and Karayan were placed on formal probation for two years. Hakobyan was ordered to serve 180 days in jail, and Karayan was ordered to serve 150 days in jail. This case was jointly investigated by the SVPD and the California Highway Patrol, and prosecuted by the District Attorney’s Office Fraud and Technology Crimes Unit.

The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 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.