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Honduran National Unlawfully Residing in the United States Sentenced to 21 Years in Federal Prison for Distribution of Fentanyl Resulting in Death

PORTLAND, Ore.—A Honduran national unlawfully residing in the United States was sentenced to federal prison today for distribution of fentanyl resulting in the fatal overdose death of a Portland man and possession with intent to distribute fentanyl, announced U.S. Attorney Scott E. Bradford. Gomez-Soto had more than two prior deportations and a prior drug dealing conviction.

Hugo Gomez-Soto, 51, was sentenced to 21 years in federal prison and a lifetime term of supervised release.

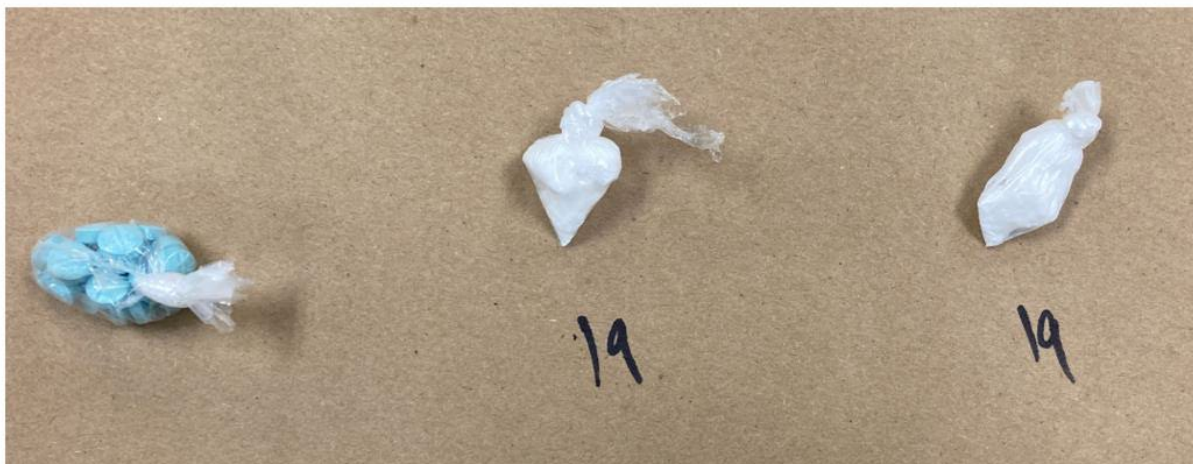
“This case is a stark reminder of the danger fentanyl poses to our community. The defendant was peddling death, and this time it resulted in the tragic loss of a young man’s life.” said Scott E. Bradford, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon. “Our hearts go out to the victim’s family. Fentanyl is deadly and leaves devastation for families in its’ wake. As this case shows, my office will do everything we can to hold these merchants of death accountable for the destruction they cause to the community and pursue justice for the victims and their families.”

“While this sentence is truly justified, no amount of prison time and no amount of restitution will bring back a lost loved one,” said Acting HSI Seattle Special Agent in Charge April Miller. “We want to thank our Portland Police Bureau partners for their work on this case. Together, we can make an impact against those like Mr. Gomez-Soto, who harm our communities with fentanyl and other illegal narcotics.”

According to trial testimony, Gomez-Soto sold the victim illicit fentanyl, in the form of powder and counterfeit pills. The following day the victim, a 29-year-old resident of Southwest Portland, used some of the fentanyl and died moments later.



On January 25, 2024, a Portland Police Bureau (PPB) officer used the victim's phone, pretending to be the victim, to buy drugs from Gomez-Soto. When Gomez-Soto arrived at the deal, he was arrested on state charges. At the time of the arrest, Gomez-Soto possessed both fentanyl powder and counterfeit pills containing fentanyl.



The police referred the case to the Multnomah District Attorney's Office who charged Gomez-Soto with negligent homicide and multiple counts of delivery of a controlled substance.

On May 5, 2025, the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office asked the U.S. Attorney's Office to review the case for federal prosecution. On May 9, 2025, with the assistance of an Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and PPB, a federal criminal complaint was filed charging Gomez-Soto with the distribution of fentanyl resulting in death and possession with intent to distribute fentanyl.

On June 18, 2025, a federal grand jury in Portland returned a two-count indictment charging Gomez-Soto with distribution of fentanyl resulting in death and possession with intent to distribute fentanyl.

On April 13, 2026, after a six-day trial, a federal jury found Gomez-Soto guilty of distributing fentanyl that resulted in death and possession with intent to distribute fentanyl.

This case was investigated by the PPB Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit with assistance from HSI and the FBI. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Scott M. Kerin and Nicole Bockelman.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid 80 to 100 times more powerful than morphine and 30 to 50 times more powerful than heroin. A 2-milligram dose of fentanyl—a few grains of the substance—is enough to kill an average adult male. The wide availability of illicit fentanyl in Oregon has caused a dramatic increase in overdose deaths throughout the state.

If you are in immediate danger, please call 911.

If you or someone you know suffers from addiction, please call the Lines for Life substance abuse helpline at 1-800-923-4357 or visit www.linesforlife.org. Phone support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also text “RecoveryNow” to 839863 between 2pm and 6pm Pacific Time daily.

This case is part of Operation Take Back America, a nationwide initiative that marshals the full resources of the Department of Justice to repel the invasion of illegal immigration, achieve the total elimination of cartels and transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), and protect our communities from the perpetrators of violent crime.

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