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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 15, 2015

Heroin Seizure in Norristown



Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman, Upper Merion Police Chief Tom Nolan and Norristown Police Chief Mark Talbot announce the arrests of Gladiz Basurto-Leal and Erik Lopez as well as a significant seizure of heroin that has an estimated street value of approximately \$330,000.00.

On March 9, 2015 the Montgomery County Overdose Task Force released a Preliminary Report that included recommendations for a multidisciplinary strategy to reduce heroin overdoses. The report's recommendations for Montgomery County Law Enforcement Agencies included a special focus on heroin cases. DA Risa Vetri Ferman said, "yesterday's seizure is significant not only because of the value of the heroin but also for the quantity of heroin that law enforcement has prevented from getting into the hands of those whose lives would be destroyed by this deadly drug."

On Monday, April 13, 2015, Montgomery County Detectives intercepted a conversation between a Hispanic Male (whose name is being withheld pending an ongoing investigation) and a Mexican Male, currently residing in Mexico, but having ties to southeastern Pennsylvania. This conversation included references to the Hispanic Male in southeastern Pennsylvania acquiring kilogram quantities of heroin from individuals within the United States. The Mexican Male put the Hispanic Male into contact with individuals in southeastern Pennsylvania in order to facilitate a transaction for a large amount of heroin.

On April 14, 2015, the investigation revealed that arrangements were made between Gladiz Basurto-Leal, who was a resident of Norristown and the Hispanic Male to meet in King of Prussia to engage in a transaction for one kilogram of heroin. Surveillance techniques were utilized and Detectives were able to find the location where the heroin was stored. A search was conducted of Lopez's residence at 541 Arch Street, which resulted in the recovery of one clear plastic bag containing a suspected kilogram of heroin, a 9mm Beretta pistol, as well as United States Currency.

On April 14, 2015 Erik Lopez and Gladiz Basurto-Leal were arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Robert Sobeck and bail was set at \$500,000 cash on each defendant. They are scheduled for a preliminary hearing before Magisterial District Judge Margaret Hunsicker on April 21, 2015 at 11:30 AM.

The case will be prosecuted by the Captain of the Narcotics Unit Kelly Lloyd and Assistant District Attorney Kathleen McLaughlin, who is also assigned to the Narcotics Unit.

Approved for release:

Risa Vetri Ferman

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.