



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington Man Sentenced to Prison for Transportation of Fentanyl

(Woodland, CA) – March 7, 2025 Joaquin Hernandez-Meneses, a 45-year-old resident of Federal Way, Washington, was convicted in January of Transportation of Controlled Substances [Fentanyl] within this State from One County to a Non-Contiguous County and admitted an enhancement for the substance exceeding ten kilograms by weight. The case was prosecuted by Supervising Deputy District Attorney Carolyn Palumbo.

On October 23, 2024, Hernandez-Meneses was driving a Silver Jeep Cherokee Northbound on I-5, traveling from Anaheim, in Southern California, back to the State of Washington, when he was stopped near County Road 22, in Yolo County, by the California Highway Patrol for vehicle code violations. A Sacramento County sheriff deputy and his canine partner, Ronan, were called to assist. During the traffic stop, Canine Officer Ronan alerted to the presence of fentanyl within the vehicle. A subsequent search of the Jeep revealed several duffle bags containing vacuum sealed bags containing approximately 64 pounds of fentanyl pills. Hernandez-Meneses was arrested and booked in the Yolo County Jail.

On February 28, 2025, Hernandez-Meneses was sentenced by Yolo County Superior Court Judge, Catherine Hohenwarter, to 16 years in local prison, which will be served in the Yolo County Jail. Hernandez-Meneses committed this crime less than one month before Prop. 36 was passed by the voters in the state of California. Had Hernandez-Meneses committed this crime after Prop. 36's effective date, he would be mandated to serve his sentence in state prison.

Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig stated that "Mr. Hernandez-Meneses was in possession of and transporting a quantity of Fentanyl Pills, through many counties, including Yolo County, which could have led to the deaths of thousands of people." "The District Attorney's Office wants to remind the public that One Pill Can Kill. We will continue to educate the public about the dangers of Fentanyl and other controlled substances, and we will continue to aggressively prosecute drug traffickers in an effort to keep our communities safe."

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