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## Guilty Pleas for Predicate Felons



**Justin Lopez**



**Erich Ruiz**

**ALBANY, NY** – District Attorney P. David Soares announced today that two defendants, with previous convictions, have pleaded guilty to felony crimes.

**JUSTIN LOPEZ**, 23, of Bronx, NY, pleaded guilty to (1) Count of Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a Class D Felony, before the Honorable Peter A. Lynch in Albany County Court yesterday morning.

On or about and between February 15, 2017 and March 8, 2017, LOPEZ did possess multiple forged prescriptions of a duly licensed physician for Promethazine/Codeine Syrup. Between said dates, LOPEZ did present said forged prescriptions to several licensed pharmacists, in Albany County, with knowledge that said prescriptions were forged and with the intent to unlawfully

obtain a quantity of a controlled substance.

In 2015, LOPEZ was convicted of Drug Conspiracy in the State of Vermont.

LOPEZ faces 3 to 6 years in State Prison when sentenced on January 5, 2018.

Assistant District Attorney Shadi Masri of the Financial Crimes Unit prosecuted this case.

Additionally, **ERICH RUIZ**, 35, of Davie, FL, pleaded guilty to (1) Count of Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a Class D Felony, before the Honorable Thomas A. Breslin.

On or about and between March 24, 2017 and March 28, 2017, RUIZ did possess seven forged credit cards and was observed by tax investigators using said credit cards to purchase numerous cartons of cigarettes at various Mobil Gas stations throughout Albany County. After further investigation, approximately 100 cartons of cigarettes were found in RUIZ'S vehicle, some of which were found to be untaxed/unstamped.

Since 2007, RUIZ has had two felony convictions, one in the State of Florida and another with the US District Court. He was convicted of Felony Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud and Felony Conspiracy Drug Trafficking.

RUIZ faces 2 1/2 to 5 years in State Prison when sentenced on December 5, 2017.

Assistant District Attorney Shadi Masri of the Financial Crimes Unit prosecuted this case.

For more information please contact the Albany County District Attorney's Office at [AlbanyDA@albanycountyny.gov](mailto:AlbanyDA@albanycountyny.gov)

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