

United States Department of Justice

**For Immediate Release**

April 1, 2010 **United States Attorney's Office**  
**Central District of California**

## **Member of Commerce City Council Arrested in Scheme to Hide Illegal Campaign Contributions from Grand Jury**

Robert Fierro, a member of the Commerce City Council, was arrested this morning by special agents with the FBI, after a grand jury indicted him and two family members in a scheme to conceal illegally reimbursed campaign contributions from a federal grand jury that was investigating allegations of political corruption in the city just east of downtown Los Angeles.

Fierro, 39, was arrested without incident and is expected to make his initial appearance this afternoon in United States District Court in Los Angeles.

A federal grand jury in Los Angeles on Tuesday returned a four-count indictment that charges Fierro with conspiracy and witness tampering.

The indictment also charges the councilman's wife, Linda Fierro, 36, and the councilman's sister-in-law, Ana Perez, 45, with conspiracy and witness tampering. Additionally, Perez, who was the treasurer of Fierro's 2005 campaign, was charged with two counts of making false declarations before the grand jury.

The indictment alleges that Perez, other family members and friends of City Council candidate Fierro each wrote two \$500 checks to Fierro's campaign in January 2005, when Fierro was first running for the office. Subsequently, Fierro reimbursed these contributions by paying them \$1,000 in cash, according to the indictment, which alleges that the reimbursements were designed to conceal both the true source of the campaign funds and the potential influences upon his actions as an elected official.

In early 2006, the FBI opened an investigation into allegations of illegal campaign contributions during the City Council campaign. The indictment alleges that Fierro contacted a friend in advance of his friend's interview by the FBI and urged the friend not to tell the FBI that he had been reimbursed for his campaign contribution. In subsequent statements to the FBI, the friend allegedly falsely denied that he received reimbursement for his contributions from Fierro.

The indictment alleges that all three defendants met with potential grand jury witnesses, such as the friend who received the \$1,000 cash reimbursement, to discuss questions to be posed by the grand jury and how to explain \$1,000 cash deposits made to their bank accounts.

In addition to the conspiracy and witness tampering counts, Perez is charged with two counts of making false declarations before the grand jury for allegedly lying to the panel about being reimbursed and lying about coordinating her story with Fierro.

An indictment contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed to be innocent until proven guilty in court.

Linda Fierro and Perez are expected to surrender to federal authorities tomorrow.

If convicted of the charges in the indictment, all three defendants would face maximum statutory sentences of five years in prison for the conspiracy count and 10 years for the witness tampering count. If convicted of making false declarations before the grand jury, Perez would face a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for each count.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.