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CBP in San Juan Seizes \$27 Million Found Inside Boxes Bound to St. Thomas

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Boxes on pallets containing \$27 million coming from San Juan and bound to St. Thomas
By. Customs and Border Protection

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO — During a joint investigation between U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Puerto Rico, CBP officers seized Saturday undeclared currency totaling \$27 million found inside boxes bound to St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

“Legal currency can be transported if properly declared under US law. Transnational Criminal Organizations seek to conceal proceeds and move it as part of their criminal activities,” indicated

Gregory Alvarez, Director of Field Operations in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. “We remain committed to working with other federal and local law enforcement partners to detect and deter smuggling attempts throughout the Caribbean.”

During outbound inspections for cargo on board the vessel MV Norma H II Voyage 818, a CBP K-9 alerted on some un-manifested pallets containing home moving boxes destined for St. Thomas.

CBP officers opened one of the boxes and discovered US currency wrapped in vacuum-sealed packages. Further inspection of the pallets revealed a total of (34) cargo boxes containing the rest of the undeclared currency.

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CBP seized the currency under failure to declare and bulk cash smuggling laws, CBP said.

This is an ongoing collaborative High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) investigation being conducted by CBP, the DEA Caribbean Region, HSI San Juan and the United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Puerto Rico, according to the release.

Correction: Sept. 1, 2020

A previous description of this story's feature image, because of a text error, stated that the money was headed to St. Croix, when it was in fact headed to St. Thomas. We've updated the story to reflect the correct information.