

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Hired to Work on Remodel of Cyril E. King Airport Pleads Guilty to Possessing 4.6 Kilos of Cocaine With Intent to Distribute

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CYRIL E. KING AIRPORT By. V.I. PORT AUTHORITY

ST. THOMAS — United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced today that Keilin Lopez Lopez, 22, a resident of St. Thomas, pleaded guilty in federal court to possession with intent to distribute approximately 4.6 kilograms of cocaine.

According to court documents, on July 31, 2020 at approximately 6:30 p.m., a Virgin Islands Port Authority employee witnessed a male tampering with a trashcan in a stall in the male restroom located inside the Cyril E. King terminal. Officers removed the

trashcan from the wall, revealing an open recess in between both sides of the interior wall. One large, brick-shaped bundle and one small, brick-shaped bundle containing approximately 4.6 kilograms of cocaine was lying at the bottom of the recess where the trashcan was previously inserted.

Airport surveillance footage showed a male, later identified as Keilin Lopez Lopez, wearing a backpack enter the bathroom where the bundles were discovered. Officers located Mr. Lopez who is an employee for a company contracted to work on the airport remodel. After being advised of his constitutional rights, Mr. Lopez waived them and stated he removed the trashcan from the wall in the restroom stall and placed the bundles inside the wall.

Lopez faces up to 40 years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$5,000,000.00. A sentencing date will be set by the Court. This case is being investigated by Homeland Security Investigations and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Juan Albino.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.