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PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Man Pleads Guilty in Check-Kiting Scheme That Cheated Banks Out of More Than \$188,000 - He and Others Opened Fraudulent Accounts, Targeting at Least Nine Banks -

WASHINGTON - Fernando Manuel Cal Denis, 32, of Rockville, Maryland, pled guilty today to a federal charge stemming from his role in a conspiracy to defraud financial institutions of more than \$188,000, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Daniel S. Cortez, Inspector in Charge of the Washington Division of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Cal Denis pled guilty in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to a charge of conspiracy to commit bank fraud. He is to be sentenced November 17, 2011 by the Honorable Emmett G. Sullivan. Under federal sentencing guidelines, Cal Dennis faces a likely sentence between 21 and 27 months in prison and a fine of up to \$50,000.

Under the plea agreement, the defendant also agreed to the forfeiture of \$188,963, representing the actual proceeds of the scheme. He also will forfeit a 2012 Mazda station wagon and \$3,487 in cash that was seized in a search of his residence.

According to evidence presented to the court by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sherri L. Schornstein, Cal Denis and others conspired from June 2009 to June 2011 to carry out a check-kiting scheme that targeted at least nine banks in the District of Columbia and elsewhere. He and others opened the accounts by presenting Mexican passports using a variety of names, as well as Articles of Organization for purported businesses. Once these accounts were opened, Cal Denis and others made a series of fraudulent deposits and transactions. The scheme involved nearly \$400,000 in financial transactions, with four banks actually losing the \$188,963.

Cal Denis has been incarcerated since his arrest in June 2011.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen and Inspector in Charge Cortez praised Special Agent Christopher Saunders of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, who investigated the case. They also acknowledged the efforts of those who worked on the case for

the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Legal Assistant Jared Forney, Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony Saler, of the Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Sherri L. Schornstein, who is prosecuting the case.

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