

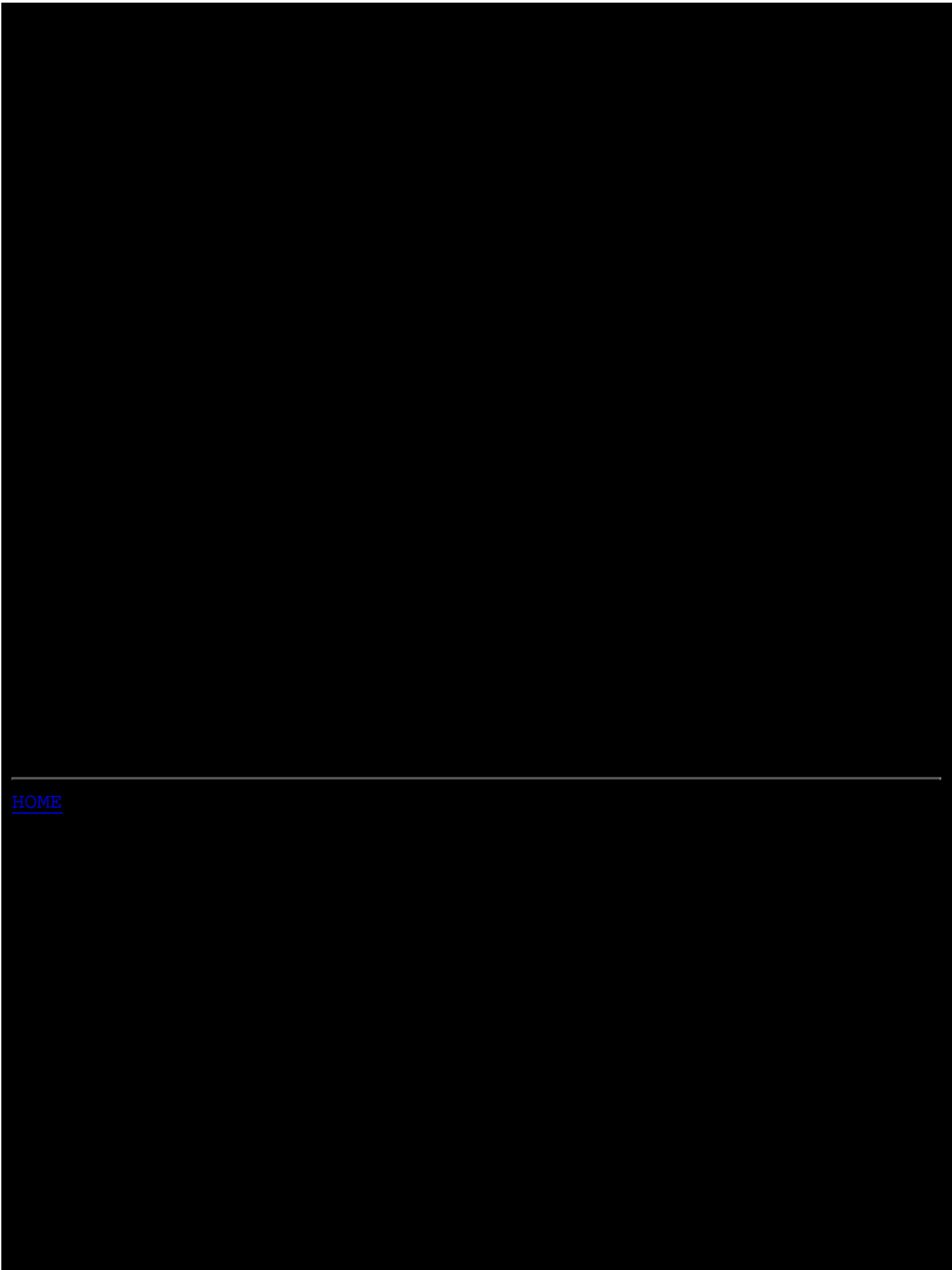
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**AUSA VICKIE E. LEDUC or
MARCIA MURPHY at 410-209-4885****JULY 12, 2007****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/md>

**OWNERS OF EL POLLO RICO RESTAURANT CHARGED WITH EMPLOYING AND HARBORING
ALIENS, MONEY LAUNDERING AND STRUCTURING DEPOSITS TO AVOID REPORTING
REQUIREMENTS****Over \$7 Million Allegedly Deposited in Small Amounts to Avoid Reporting
During 4 Year Period**

Greenbelt, Maryland - A criminal complaint has been filed charging Francisco Carlos Solano, age 55, his wife Ines Solano, age 59, both of Germantown, Maryland; Francisco's sister Consuelo Solano, age 69, of Arlington, Virginia and brother Juan Faustino Solano, age 57, of Kensington, Maryland with employing and harboring illegal aliens, money laundering and structuring deposits to avoid currency reporting requirements, in connection with the operation of the El Pollo Rico restaurant in Wheaton, Maryland, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. The sealed criminal complaint was filed on Monday, July 9, 2007 and unsealed today upon the arrests of the defendants.

According to the affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint, Francisco, Consuelo and Juan Solano are natives of Peru, and Ines Solano is a native of Columbia, who became naturalized U.S. citizens. Francisco and Consuelo own the El Pollo Rico restaurant. The defendants are alleged to have employed numerous illegal aliens at the restaurant, paying them in cash until the employee obtained temporary status, at which time they were paid by check. Employees were housed in residences owned by Francisco Solano in Wheaton and Kensington, Maryland. Agents observed that next to the restaurant cash register was a sign stating "cash only," along with an ATM from which customers withdrew cash to pay for food. According to the company that operates the ATM, the restaurant stocks the ATM with money and the company operating the ATM reimburses the restaurant for cash withdrawn by customers. Among other things, cash payments permitted the defendants to hide payments to illegal alien employees.

The affidavit alleges that from June 5, 2002 until September 29, 2006, over 800 deposits in amounts typically ranging from \$7,000 to \$9,000 each, totaling over \$6.6 million, were made into an El Pollo Rico business account. The deposits were allegedly made in order to avoid triggering the filing of a currency transaction report (CTR), required for amounts in excess of \$10,000. On 15 occasions more than one deposit of less than \$10,000 was made on the same day, at the same branch bank, often within hours of each other. Most of the deposits from the restaurant proceeds were allegedly made by Francisco or Ines Solano, and were comprised mostly of \$10s and \$20s in newer condition. Checks were



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