



THE CITY OF
SAN FERNANDO

CITY COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

MAYOR
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: February 3, 2016

COUNCILMEMBER
JAIME SOTO

SAN FERNANDO POLICE, FIRST AGENCY IN CALIFORNIA TO SECURE A FELONY CONVICTION FOR ILLEGAL INTERNET CASINO

San Fernando, CA – On February 2, 2016, the owner and operator of an illegal internet casino located in the City of San Fernando was sentenced to 180 days in county jail, three years of felony probation, and forfeited all property seized during a search warrant.

The felony conviction was successfully secured after months of investigating a known gambling establishment in a collaborated effort between the San Fernando Police Department, the State of California Department of Justice Gambling Unit, and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration. During the execution of a search warrant at the property, approximately 25 people were detained for gambling, two employees were detained, 23 citations were issued for various city code violations, and 59 monitors and keyboards, wireless routers, a computer server, two safes, and approximately \$1,500 in cash was seized.

“Being the first successful felony conviction of its kind, the California Department of Justice Gambling Bureau has advised our department that they plan on using this case as a training tool with other police agencies throughout California to better assist them with securing a felony conviction when dealing with illegal internet casinos in their respective jurisdictions,” said Chief Anthony Vairo.

California’s gambling industry was essentially unregulated prior to 1998. In 1984, the Legislature enacted the “Gaming Registration Act,” which required the Attorney General’s office to provide uniform, minimum regulation of California card rooms. In 1997, the Legislature enacted the “Gambling Control Act” to provide broader oversight of California’s gambling industry (Chapter 867, Statutes of 1997). In March 2000, California voters passed Proposition 1A to amend the Constitution and authorize the Governor, with the approval of the Legislature, to negotiate and conclude compacts for the operation of slot machines, lottery games and banking and percentage card games by federally recognized Indian tribes on Indian lands.

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Chief Vairo continued, “We feel that it’s not only our duty to protect our citizens, but to educate them as well. Gambling addiction is increasing due to the popularity of poker and the availability of online gambling, which is easy to access at any age.”

If you suspect that a family member or friend has a gambling problem, you can find information, resources, and assistance from the California Department of Public Health Office of Problem Gambling (1-800-GAMBLER or problemgambling.securespsites.com).

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