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CITY ATTORNEY ROCKY DELGADILLO FILES CHARGES AGAINST FIVE VALLEY AUTO REPAIR SHOPS FOR FRAUD

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo today announced his Office's Criminal Frauds and Enforcement Unit has filed charges against five San Fernando Valley auto repair shops for fraud against customers.

Among the cases filed by Delgadillo's Office include two grand theft charges against Francis Garcia, 39, the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Auto Shack in Van Nuys. Garcia faces up to one year in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine per count.

Charges against Garcia stem from an incident in September 2006 when a customer of Auto Shack was advised she needed to replace her engine for a cost of \$1,800. The victim paid a \$900 deposit for repairs only to have her vehicle stop running on the freeway two weeks later. An investigation by the Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) determined that the original engine had never been replaced.

The BAR also discovered that a second victim had paid \$825 for parts and labor which were not performed by mechanics at Auto Shack. Results of both investigations were forwarded to City Attorney Delgadillo's Criminal and Special Litigation Unit for prosecution.

In another case, Spencer Ahn Nguyen, 24, the owner of Fusion Auto Collision Repair in Tarzana was charged with two counts of insurance fraud and one count of failure to provide a customer with a written estimate for parts and labor. If convicted, Nguyen could face up to one year in jail for each count of insurance fraud and six months in jail for each remaining count.

A BAR investigation revealed that Nguyen had defrauded two victims by failing to repair their vehicles as set forth in estimates submitted to insurance companies following an accident. Nguyen subsequently shut down his shop without notifying the victims and abandoned all repairs on the vehicles.

Additional charges were also filed against Jim Ryach, 44, of Jims Auto Clinic in Tujunga; Cesar Alvarado, 38, of Exclusive Auto Body Center in Van Nuys; and Kaliescyia De Berry, 21, and Ivo Raese, 31, of California Auto Repair and Service in Canoga Park for failing to perform auto body repair work as invoiced.

All BAR investigations were referred to City Attorney Delgadillo's Criminal Frauds and Enforcement Section for prosecution by Deputy City Attorneys Keith De la Rosa and Michelle Anderson.