

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



DA 08-254

RELEASE NUMBER

August 11, 2014

RELEASE DATE

APPROVED BY *Joyce E. Dudley* JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Kelly Scott Kelly Scott, Chief Deputy District Attorney.

CONTACT (805) 346-7632

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

August 11, 2014

Re: *The People of the State of California v. Ismael Cancinos and Mercedes Alvarez*, Case No. 1449309

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that Ismael Cancinos, age 56, of Palmdale, CA pled guilty to 34 felony charges associated with defrauding homeowners in Santa Barbara as well as other counties in California. Mercedes Alvarez, age 48 of Palmdale, CA and a co-conspirator, pled to 7 felony charges stemming from the same fraudulent activity. Alvarez will be sentenced on August 25, 2014, and Cancinos will be sentenced on September 15, 2014.

Cancinos and Alvarez preyed upon primarily Santa Barbara County homeowners who were facing the foreclosure of their homes by promising to obtain a modification of their loan or otherwise rescue the home from the bank.

Cancinos pled guilty to 2 counts of first degree residential burglary (both constituting "strikes"), 3 counts of grand theft, and 29 counts of fraudulent practices of a foreclosure consultant. Alvarez pled to 7 counts of fraudulent practices of a foreclosure consultant and admitted the special allegation of committing an aggravated white collar crime. In addition to their prison sentences, Cancinos and Alvarez will be ordered to pay full restitution to their victims and Alvarez, a licensed real estate salesperson, will be required to surrender her real estate license.

District Attorney Joyce Dudley commended the District Attorney's Real Estate Fraud Unit for their outstanding investigative work in this case and stated, "Real estate fraud negatively impacts our community, as well as the homeowners who rely on so-called 'professionals.' County residents are reminded to never pay an upfront fee to an individual or business claiming to provide services that would rescue the resident from a pending foreclosure."

□ SANTA BARBARA OFFICE
1112 Santa Barbara Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2300
Fax: (805) 568-2398

□ SANTA MARIA OFFICE
312-D East Cook Street
Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 346-7540
Fax: (805) 346-7588

□ LOMPOC OFFICE
115 Civic Center Plaza
Lompoc, CA 93436
(805) 737-7760
Fax: (805) 737-7732