

Customs officials in Louisville intercept 3,000 fake IDs

BY TOM LATEK
KENTUCKY TODAY

LOUISVILLE — For the second time in a week, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers discovered a large quantity of counterfeit driver's licenses inside an inbound package at Louisville's Port of Entry.

The shipment Oct. 19 contained 2,265 driver's licenses from all over the U.S. They were hidden in a shipment manifested as postcards to avoid detection. The licenses were arriving from Hong Kong

and all lacked security features and were of poor quality, officials said.

Seven days earlier, CBP officers in Louisville seized another package that contained 1,094 fake driver's licenses.

"The use of counterfeit IDs is often linked to terrorist cells, human trafficking, and other illicit and dangerous activities," said LaFonda D. Sutton-Burke who is director of field operations in Chicago, which oversees the Port of Louisville. "Our officers are trained to identify many different kinds of fake or illegally modified documents, and they work 24/7 to stop them from coming into the country."

Counterfeit documents, such as these driver's licenses, can be used as a means for college students who have not yet turned the age of 21, to enter a bar or business that sells and serves alcohol. The CBP says unfortunately, these students put themselves at great risk when purchasing

these fake documents. "These counterfeit driver's licenses can lead to disastrous consequences," said Thomas Mahn, port director in Louisville. "Criminal organizations use these counterfeit IDs to avoid attracting attention to their illegal activities. Our CBP officers were able to identify these counterfeits and stop them from reaching their destinations."

Only two companies have authorization by the U.S. Department of State to print international driv-

er's licenses in the United States: The American Automobile Association and the American Automobile Touring Alliance. The IDs were considered counterfeit based upon the lack of fine line detail and exhibited features that were not consistent with the document type.

Customs officers coordinate identification findings with the agency's Fraudulent Document

Analysis Unit, Homeland Security Investigations and other federal partners to combat illicit activity.

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This hearing will be streamed live and may be viewed on the PSC website, psc.ky.gov. Public comments may be made at the beginning of the hearing. Those wishing to make oral public comments may do so by following the instructions listing on the PSC website, psc.ky.gov.

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