

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE Northern District of Illinois – CM/ECF NextGen 1.8 (rev. 1.8.5)
Eastern Division**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No.: 1:25-cr-00637

Honorable Joan H. Lefkow

Juan Espinoza Martinez

Defendant.

NOTIFICATION OF DOCKET ENTRY

This docket entry was made by the Clerk on Thursday, January 15, 2026:

MINUTE entry before the Honorable Joan H. Lefkow as to Juan Espinoza Martinez: Defendant's motion to exclude the government's gang evidence and expert testimony (dkt. [89]) is granted. Testimony from SOI-1 or any other source regarding the Latin Kings, gangs in Chicago, and ties to or affinity for gangs that the defendant may have are excluded. Without evidence showing that defendant is a member of the Latin Kings or that the Latin Kings instructed defendant to send the alleged murder-for-hire information, the prejudicial nature of such testimony outweighs any probative value in violation of Fed. R. Evid. 403. *United States v. Irvin*, 87 F.3d 860, 866 (7th Cir. 1996) ("The highly charged gang-affiliation evidence served as a substitute for [] direct evidence [of the crime charged], increasing the chance of guilt purely by association."); see also *United States v. Street*, 548 F.3d 618, 632 (8th Cir. 2008) (emphasis in original) (reasoning that admissible gang evidence should "concern a defendant's own gang membership"). Nevertheless, SOI-1 may testify to what he understood "LK" and the accompanying emojis to mean in the message he received from defendant and may testify to how he received the message. Mailed notice (ags)

ATTENTION: This notice is being sent pursuant to Rule 77(d) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure or Rule 49(c) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. It was generated by CM/ECF, the automated docketing system used to maintain the civil and criminal dockets of this District. If a minute order or other document is enclosed, please refer to it for additional information.

For scheduled events, motion practices, recent opinions and other information, visit our web site at www.ilnd.uscourts.gov.