

Two San Diego area teenagers charged with hate crime in migrant beating

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Body

Two teenagers were charged with hate crimes in an attack that left an illegal immigrant in a coma.

James Grlicky and Waylon Kennell, both 17, pleaded innocent Tuesday to charges of robbery, assault, torture, conspiracy and hate-crime allegations.

They were charged as adults.

A third suspect, Justin Samuel Smith, 18, was arrested shortly after the attack and has pleaded innocent to similar charges.

Jose Luis Cisneros was hospitalized in a come for several days following the Sept. 24 attack in east San Diego County.

He continues to recover from head and facial injuries, a Mexican Consulate official said.

Outside the courtroom, Kennell's lawyer said his client had been holding Cisneros for the U.S. Border Patrol and acted in self-defense when Cisneros "came toward him."

"He had gotten some information that this guy was illegal and thought he was doing his part," attorney Kerry Armstrong said. "You hear a lot of stories about so-called illegals coming over. My client has a problem with it to a certain extent. He thinks if people are coming over, they should do it legally."

Deputy District Attorney Wendy Patrick said the defendants went looking for "beaners" to beat and rob and went to a spot where they knew they could find undocumented immigrants.

Patrick said Cisneros was repeatedly stomped in the face.

In an interview last month at the Mexican Consulate, Cisneros told The San Diego Union-Tribune he had crossed the border illegally the day of the attack to look for work.

He was walking near a highway when he was assaulted and robbed of his wallet and \$40, he said.

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