



## PRESS RELEASE

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### ***Newest CA Lottery Powerball® Winner Claims He Knows Why He Won Nearly \$4 Million!***

**SACRAMENTO** – One number off! That’s all that kept Misael Cruz from banking the more than \$600 million jackpot from the [January 30<sup>th</sup> Powerball draw](#). But he’s not complaining one bit. Cruz’s ticket matched five of the six winning numbers, earning him a \$3,987,249 prize. Cruz came forward to claim his prize and has been declared California’s newest big Powerball winner.

“I kind of had a (lucky) feeling that day I bought my tickets,” Cruz told the Lottery. “The clerk wished me good luck. When I was walking out the door, I said to myself, ‘what if I win?!’” Cruz bought his lucky ticket at an ARCO ampm gas station in San Bernardino County.

It actually took a text from his son the evening *after the draw* for Cruz to check his ticket. Cruz usually only checks his lottery tickets every two or three weeks because he plays so regularly.

“I was sitting on my couch, and my son texted me,” Cruz explained. “He said, ‘Dad, don’t you buy your lottery tickets at that gas station in Fontana?’ I buy them there all the time. He told me somebody won Powerball there. I looked online, and then my heart started beating fast. I turned to my girlfriend, and she didn’t believe I won because I didn’t show any emotion. I was in shock. I didn’t believe it. I had to check the numbers three times!”

Cruz says he was not specifically motivated to buy his ticket because of the increasingly higher Powerball jackpot, which had been climbing for weeks. He says he plays every time he gets gas. He picks up tickets for SuperLotto Plus®, Powerball, and Mega Millions®.

“I know exactly why I won. Exactly why,” Cruz surmised. “I help a lot of people, and I never expect anything in return. It’s what I teach my children. I know I was rewarded for helping.”

As for what he plans on doing with his new money, the answer should not surprise anyone.

“I’m going to keep helping people. I will invest some, but this money is not going to change me as a person. I will still shop for the cheapest prices,” Cruz said with a laugh.



Image of the ARCO ampm gas station at 16120 Slover Avenue in Fontana where Cruz bought his winning Powerball ticket worth nearly \$4 million

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*The California Lottery's mission is to provide supplemental funding to California public schools, including kindergarten and grades 1-12, community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and other California public educational entities. The funds the Lottery transferred to public education totaled approximately \$2 billion for fiscal year 2021-22, which amounted to a modest percentage of education's overall budget. However, this funding is largely discretionary, meaning schools can use this for important, yet unfunded instructional programs they would otherwise not afford. During the same period, the Lottery generated more than \$8.8 billion in sales, more than 95% of which went back to the community in the form of prize payments, retailer commissions and bonuses, and contributions to education. If you feel you have a gambling problem or know someone who does, you can get free confidential help by calling the California Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLER.*

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