



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

CANADIAN MAN SENTENCED TO 24 MONTHS FOR FALSELY CLAIMING TO BE A U.S. CITIZEN

PHOENIX – Richard Steven Riess, 34, of Ontario, Canada, was sentenced to 24 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Susan R. Bolton. Riess was found guilty by a federal jury on November 5, 2008 of Perjury and False Claim of Citizenship.

Riess made a false claim of U.S. citizenship when he appeared before U.S. Immigration Judge Sean Keenan for a removal hearing on October 31, 2007. Riess swore under oath to tell the truth but during that hearing, he testified that he was a U.S. citizen and falsely claimed that his parents were born in the United States. During the November 2008 trial, the government was able to prove that Riess is a Canadian citizen through the use of passport and birth records.

“We have a duty to protect the integrity of our immigration court system,” stated U.S. Attorney, Diane J. Humetewa. “This sentence demonstrates our resolve to prosecute those who undermine the court system through deceit and false statements.”

“Riess’ attempt to subvert the truth is an offense against the high value our system places on honesty in the courtroom,” said Katrina S. Kane, field office director of ICE’s Office of Detention and Removal Operations in Arizona. “The judge’s sentence in this case will provide Riess with ample opportunity to reflect on the damage perjury does to the judicial system and the serious penalties that await those who seek to deceive.”

The sentencing occurred on Friday, February 13, 2009. The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Detention and Removal Operations. The prosecution was handled by Mark Brnovich and Josh Parecki, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR 08-0723-PHX-SRB
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