



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ELOY MAN SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR ACCESSORY TO TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS

PHOENIX – Agustin Salas-Garcia, 37, previously of Eloy, Ariz., was sentenced yesterday by U.S. District Judge Frederick J. Martone to 18 months in federal prison. Salas-Garcia pleaded guilty on November 24, 2008 to Transporting Illegal Aliens, Accessory after the Fact. A legal permanent resident at the time of the offense, Salas-Garcia will be deported to Mexico after serving his sentence.

On April 27, 2008, a 1989 Ford pickup truck registered to Salas-Garcia was carrying at least 27 illegal aliens while traveling in Arizona City, Ariz. The driver, later identified as the defendant's brother, Hector Salas-Garcia, failed to control his speed and the truck rolled over killing four passengers. The driver managed to leave the accident scene and Agustin Salas-Garcia admitted helping his brother leave the United States in order to avoid apprehension and punishment for his crime. Hector Salas-Garcia remains a fugitive.

When sentencing Agustin Salas-Garcia, Judge Martone noted that "transporting illegal aliens is a dangerous business. One in which human beings are treated like cattle and are seriously at risk of injury and death and, of course, that is precisely what happened here."

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Border Patrol and the Pinal County Sheriff's Office. The prosecution was handled by Lisa Jennis Settel, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-485-PHX-FJM
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