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For Immediate Release
July 27, 2009

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Naturalized citizen sentenced for transporting illegal aliens

Portland, Maine: United States Attorney Paula D. Silsby, announced today that United States District Judge D. Brock Hornby sentenced Carlos Da Silva, 64, of Portland, Maine, to 6 months incarceration, 2 years Supervised Release and a \$5,000 fine for 11 counts of transporting illegal aliens, for profit, and to further their illegal status, in violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii). Mr. Da Silva is a native of Brazil who immigrated to the United States in 1971 and became a naturalized United States citizen in 1976.

According to court records, between about September of 2007 and about March 20, 2008, Carlos Da Silva conspired with Guilherme Malaquias to transport illegal aliens from Massachusetts to Maine for the purpose of obtaining Maine driver's licenses. Those illegal aliens wanted Maine driver's licenses in order to facilitate their continued illegal presence in the United States by making it easier for them to move about, work, and engage in commerce. Mr. Malaquias was a native of Brazil, illegally present in the United States and living in Massachusetts at the time. He has pleaded guilty, served his sentence and been deported.

More specifically, Mr. Malaquias met Mr. Da Silva in about September of 2007 when Mr. Malaquias had traveled from Massachusetts to Maine with a friend, who was also a native of Brazil illegally present in the United States. Malaquias had come to Maine in order to renew his post office box. Mr. Malaquias' friend had come so that he could get a Maine driver's license.

The friend introduced Mr. Malaquias to Mr. Da Silva. Mr. Da Silva and Mr. Malaquias agreed to work together, finding and referring illegal aliens to each other, and helping those illegal aliens obtain Maine driver's licenses. On this occasion, Mr. Da Silva drove Mr. Malaquias and his friend first to get the friend a post office box and then to the Portland Office of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles so that the friend could obtain a Maine driver's license.

Thereafter, Mr. Malaquias brought other illegal aliens to Maine. Once in Maine, Mr. Da Silva helped these illegal aliens get a United States Post Office box or a UPS mail box to use as a Maine residence on their application for a Maine driver's license, and to use for their correspondence with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. Mr. Da Silva assisted the illegal aliens

through the process of applying for and obtaining licenses from the BMV by serving as a translator and intermediary for the aliens in their dealings with clerks at the BMV. He would also translate written examinations for the aliens. For these services, Mr. Da Silva typically charged his customers \$50 for assistance at the BMV and some additional amount for assistance in obtaining a Post Office or mail box. Mr. Malaquias typically charged the aliens several hundred dollars for transporting them from Massachusetts to Maine and back.

Mr. DaSilva also met other illegal aliens in search of Maine driver's licenses without Mr. Malaquias' help and assisted them.

In this way, between September of 2007 and March 20, 2008, Mr. Da Silva assisted more than 25 illegal aliens obtain Maine driver's licenses.

Maine has since adopted laws that require applicants for Maine identity documents to provide verifiable proof of residence in Maine and legal presence in the United States prior to being issued any Maine driver's license or State identification card.

Special Agent In Charge for United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Office in Boston Bruce M. Foucart said that "closing vulnerabilities in our nation's immigration system is a top national security priority for ICE."

United States Attorney Silsby praised the investigative work of the Department of Homeland Security, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. She also expressed appreciation for the valuable assistance provided by the Maine Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles; Maine's Department of Public Safety; the Maine State Police; and the Saco and Biddeford Police Departments.