

For Immediate Release
August 29, 2011

**EL PASO MAN SENTENCED TO 135 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR
CONVICTION ON MARIJUANA AND HEROIN CHARGES**

LAS CRUCES – On August 26, 2011, in federal court in Las Cruces, **Jose Leonides Lopez-Torres**, 51, of El Paso, Texas, was sentenced to 135 months in prison for his conviction on conspiracy and distribution of marijuana and heroin charges. Lopez-Torres will serve a four-year term of supervised release after completing his prison sentence. Lopez-Torres has been in federal custody since his arrest on December 29, 2010.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Lopez-Torres and two co-defendants were charged in a four-count indictment filed on December 20, 2010. The indictment alleged that, between May 2010, and July 21, 2010, Lopez-Torres conspired with **Victor Manuel Montoya**, 37, of El Paso, and **Lauriano Juarez**, 32, a Mexican national, and others to possess more than 100 kilograms of marijuana with the intent to distribute. Lopez-Torres also was charged with two counts of distribution of marijuana and one count of distribution of heroin.

On May 10, 2011, Lopez-Torres pled guilty to all four counts of the indictment. During his plea hearing, Lopez-Torres admitted that on May 7, 2010, he and Montoya delivered 149 kilograms of marijuana to a ranch in Vado, New Mexico. The marijuana was transported by another individual to Kansas. Lopez-Torres also admitted that, as partial payment to the individual who delivered the marijuana to Kansas, Lopez-Torres delivered 491 grams of heroin to that individual on May 25, 2010, in Mesilla Park, New Mexico. Lopez-Torres admitted making a third delivery on July 21, 2010, taking 262 kilograms of marijuana to the ranch in Vado.

On May 3, 2011, Juarez pled guilty to conspiracy, and was sentenced to 27 months in prison for his part in the conspiracy on June 27, 2011. Juarez will be deported when he completes his prison sentence.

On June 21, 2011, Montoya entered a guilty plea to an information charging him with misprision of a felony. Montoya, who has not yet been sentenced, could receive up to three years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and one year of supervised release.

This case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sarah M. Davenport.

###

11-359