

For Immediate Release
November 17, 2011

ROSWELL MAN CONVICTED OF FEDERAL GUN CHARGE

LAS CRUCES – U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that, earlier today, a federal jury sitting in Las Cruces convicted **Raul Roger Orona**, Jr., 29, a resident of Roswell, N.M., of being a felon in possession of a firearm after a three-day jury trial. The jury deliberated for three hours before returning the guilty verdict. Orona, who was arrested on February 22, 2011, will remain in custody pending his sentencing hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

According to the evidence at trial, on January 6, 2011, a Roswell police officer stopped a vehicle in which Orona was a passenger. At the time of the traffic stop, there was an outstanding state arrest warrant for Orona for battery of a household member. The officer asked the occupants if there were any firearms in the vehicle. One of the passengers told the officer that there was a handgun in her purse. Officers searched the purse and found a .45 caliber pistol. The passenger initially claimed that the gun belonged to her, but later admitted that the firearm belonged to Orona and that she had purchased the firearm at his request. Officers also obtained the surveillance video from the pawn shop where the gun was purchased which showed that Orona was present when the handgun was purchased.

According to court records, Orona was prohibited from possessing a firearm because he had two prior felony convictions: (1) shooting at or from a motor vehicle (Chaves County); and (2) extortion and aggravated assault (Chaves County).

At sentencing, which has yet to be scheduled, Orona faces a mandatory minimum sentence of fifteen years of imprisonment.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Roswell Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys W.

Ronald Jennings and Aaron O. Jordan.

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