

For Immediate Release  
November 30, 2011

**REPEAT OFFENDER SENTENCED TO 292 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT  
FOR FEDERAL NARCOTICS AND FIREARMS CONVICTION**

ALBUQUERQUE – Earlier today, **Robert Sanchez**, 43, was sentenced to 292 months imprisonment for his conviction on federal narcotics and firearms charges, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales. Sanchez, an alleged member of the Los Padillas Gang who resides in Albuquerque, will be on supervised release for eight years after he completes his prison sentence.

Sanchez was indicted on December 28, 2010, and charged with (1) possession of more than 100 grams of heroin with intent to distribute; (2) being a felon in possession of firearms; and (3) possession of firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense. According to the indictment, Sanchez committed the three offenses in Bernalillo County on November 5, 2010.

Court records reflect that Sanchez was prohibited from possessing firearms on November 5, 2010 because he previously had been convicted of five narcotics trafficking felony offenses, including four state convictions and one federal conviction. Sanchez served an aggregate of 364 days imprisonment for his four state convictions, and was sentenced to 46 months imprisonment for his 1995 federal conviction.

Sanchez was transferred from state custody to federal custody on January 10, 2011, and has been in federal custody since that time. On August 11, 2011, Sanchez entered a guilty plea to the three-count indictment without the benefit of a plea agreement.

According to court filings, Sanchez was charged after local law enforcement officials and state probation officers went to his residence on November 5, 2010, in an effort to execute an arrest warrant for another probationer. At the residence, the officers encountered Sanchez, who

acknowledged that he was on probation. After patting Sanchez down and finding \$600 in one of his pockets, the probation officers conducted a home check of the residence and recovered two loaded firearms and a small quantity of heroin. After the probation officers found the firearms and heroin, the officers obtained a search warrant for the residence and its curtilage. Execution of the search warrant resulted in the recovery of 362.7 grams of heroin, \$6,600 in cash, five more firearms and Los Padillas Gang paraphernalia. Sanchez was arrested on November 5, 2010 on state charges and was detained in state custody until his arrest on federal charges.

U.S. Attorney Gonzales said that the case against Sanchez was adopted from the state judicial system as part of a federal anti-violence initiative that targets “the worst of the worst” offenders for federal prosecution. Under the initiative, a state-wide, multi-agency effort denominated as the New Mexico Federal Gang Task Force, the U.S. Attorney’s Office and federal law enforcement agencies work with New Mexico’s District Attorneys and state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies to target violent or repeat offenders for federal prosecution with the goal of removing the offenders from our communities for as long as possible.

In announcing Sanchez’s sentencing, U.S. Attorney Gonzales said, “Heroin is a very serious problem for too many families in New Mexico, and I am committed to prosecuting heroin traffickers who exploit addiction to line their pockets to the fullest extent of the law. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the local, state and federal partners who participate in the New Mexico Federal Gang Task Force, the people of Albuquerque won’t have to worry about Robert Sanchez peddling dope in their community for more than two decades.”

The case was investigated by the Middle Rio Grande Valley Drug Task Force, the Bernalillo County Sheriff’s Office, the New Mexico Department of Probation and Parole, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joel R.

Meyers.

# # #

11-477