



PRESS RELEASE

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**WHITEHORSE, N.M., MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO
FEDERAL ROBBERY AND ASSAULT CHARGES**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court, Robert Billy Castillo, Jr., 25, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation from Whitehorse, N.M., pled guilty to a two-count indictment charging him with robbery and assault with a dangerous weapon. U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Castillo pled guilty to robbing the Giant Gas Station, in Crownpoint, N.M., which is located within the Navajo Indian Reservation, on Oct. 8, 2011.

According to court filings, Castillo went into the gas station, armed himself with an empty vodka bottle, and demanded that the three store clerks give him money from the cash register. After a male clerk prevented Castillo from striking a female clerk with the bottle by impeding the blow, Castillo went behind the counter and attempted unsuccessfully to open the cash register. In the meantime, the three clerks locked themselves away in a room at the back of the gas station while Castillo damaged equipment in the gas station and continued to demand money. The clerks then called the police and contacted the owner of the gas station. After a brief physical struggle with the owner, Castillo fled from the gas station and was apprehended by the police shortly thereafter.

Castillo entered his guilty plea without the benefit of any plea agreement, and admitted that he committed the two offenses charged in the indictment. At sentencing, Castillo faces a maximum penalty of 15 years of imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine on each offense. Castillo is in federal custody and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

The case was investigated by the Crownpoint District of the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Niki Tapia-Brito.

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