



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shana Jones, Special Assistant
Daryl Fields, Public Information Officer
(210) 384-7440

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ODESSA MOTHER AND SON PLEAD GUILTY TO COCAINE DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY

John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney, announced that this afternoon in Midland, Jose Esparza, 34, and his mother, Lydia Esparza, 55, each of Odessa, pleaded guilty to conspiring to possess cocaine with intent to distribute.

In their pleas before United States Magistrate Judge B. Dwight Goains, each admitted that agents with the Drug Enforcement Administration recovered more than a kilogram of cocaine during a search warrant executed at Lydia Esparza's residence in December 2008. The cocaine, which had a street value of more than \$25,000, was found in Lydia Esparza's bedroom. Both admitted in their pleas that Jose Esparza was a cocaine dealer and that Lydia Esparza allowed her son to store his cocaine at her residence: 1) in exchange for financial compensation; and, 2) because her clean record with law enforcement would make it less likely that her son would get caught.

Lydia Esparza faces a mandatory minimum of five years in federal prison, up to a maximum of 40 years, and a maximum \$2 million fine when she is sentenced in approximately 90 days. Because he has a prior narcotics conviction, Jose Esparza faces a minimum ten years of incarceration, up to a maximum of life, and a possible \$4 million fine.

A third defendant in the case, 49-year-old Ruben Zamora of Seagoville, Texas, faces between five and forty years in federal prison after pleading guilty to the cocaine conspiracy charge on May 14, 2009.

Assistant United States Attorney Kerry Ann Fleck is prosecuting the case for the Government.

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