



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

**John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney**

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Contact: Daryl Fields  
Public Information Officer  
(210) 384-7440

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**EL PASO SECTOR BORDER PATROL AGENT PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD CHARGE**

**John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney**, announced that in El Paso, Border Patrol agent Ernesto Tellez faces up to two years in federal prison and \$34,425 restitution after pleading guilty this afternoon to making a false statement to federal authorities.

Appearing before United States Magistrate Judge Michael McDonald, Tellez admitted that on November 24, 2004, he signed a U.S. Housing and Urban Development certification to purchase a home under the Officer Next Door Program/Teacher Next Door Program (OND/TND) knowing that certification contained false information.

The OND/TND program makes greatly discounted real property available for purchase by law enforcement officers and teachers under certain conditions. Among those conditions is that the law enforcement officer or teacher occupy the residence for at least three years and that they own no other real property.

According to court records, Tellez executed similar annual certification forms since 2004. Each time, Tellez certified that he abided by program terms when in fact, he did own interest in other residential property and thus, was not in compliance. On January 4, 2007, believing that Tellez had satisfied the original terms of the agreement, HUD released the \$38,250 lien on the property. Per the plea agreement and the OND/TND default formula, Tellez has agreed to pay restitution amounting to 90% of the HUD lien.

No sentencing date has been scheduled.

This case was investigated by agents with the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General and the Department of Housing and Urban Development--Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorney Greg McDonald is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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