



**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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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LEADER OF ALIEN-SMUGGLING ORGANIZATION SENTENCED**

**John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney**, announced that the last defendant in an alien-smuggling operation based in Austin, Texas was sentenced yesterday. United States District Court Judge Alia Ludlum sentenced Francisco Landeros to 108 months in federal prison after he pled guilty to conspiracy to harbor illegal aliens.

Landeros and two other defendants, Norma Lopez-Rosales and Maribel Martinez-Ronco, were named in a four-count indictment on April 25, 2007. All three pled guilty to count three, which charged conspiracy to harbor illegal aliens between March 1, 2005 and March 27, 2007. On September 17, 2007 Lopez-Rosales was sentenced to 72 months imprisonment. On November 26, 2007, Martinez-Ronco was sentenced to 51 months imprisonment. The court held the three defendants responsible for smuggling over 3000 aliens during the charged time-frame.

On March 27, 2007, Lopez-Rosales and Martinez-Ronco were arrested in Austin, Texas, for smuggling illegal aliens. At an Austin residence on Carver Street, federal agents discovered 20 illegal aliens in an upstairs bedroom. Lopez and Martinez admitted they were staging the aliens pending their transportation to either Dallas or Houston, Texas. They also admitted they were paid by Francisco Landeros to keep the aliens at the residence until smuggling fees were paid by the aliens.

Landeros gave Lopez money to pay the rent for the Carver Street residence. Lopez, who was assisted by Martinez, fed the aliens and contacted their respondents to ensure the smuggling fees were paid. Landeros reimbursed Lopez the cost for feeding the aliens.

This case was investigated by agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Austin and Eagle Pass Division, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert J. Brady, Jr.

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