

PRESS RELEASE

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Benito Mendez-Villalba, 37, a citizen of Mexico, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 27 months in federal prison for illegally re-entering the United States after having been previously deported. The defendant pleaded guilty to this charge on February 10, 2009.

Mendez-Villalba was arrested by law enforcement officials in Rusk County on September 16, 2008, after being found as a stowaway on a train.

At sentencing, Judge Crabb stated that the defendant had a history of violating the immigration laws of the United States. Specifically, she stated that Mendez-Villalba was deported on four prior occasions. Further, he was on supervised release from another District for the same conduct at the time of this offense.

The charges against Mendez-Villalba were the result of an investigation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney David J. Reinhard.

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