

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

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For Immediate Release

LEADER OF ALIEN SMUGGLING ORGANIZATION SENTENCED TO 12 YEARS' CUSTODY AND \$180,000 IN FORFEITURE

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY -July 1, 2011

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced that Carlos Gomez-Garcia, who previously pled guilty to conspiring to bring in illegal aliens for financial gain and assisting the entry into the United States of an aggravated felon, was sentenced in federal court. The Honorable Dana M. Sabraw sentenced Gomez-Garcia to serve 151 months' custody, plus 3 years of supervised release. The Court also ordered Gomez-Garcia to pay \$180,000 in criminal forfeiture, which represents the total gross amount of money paid by some of the aliens he smuggled into the United States.

According to the plea agreement, Gomez-Garcia was the leader of an alien smuggling organization and helped more than 100 aliens enter the United States illegally. Among other things, Gomez-Garcia admitted to arranging for coconspirators in Mexico to send a panga boat containing twenty-three illegal aliens from Mexico to a beach in Del Mar, California. On August 10, 2010, Gomez-Garcia traveled to the beach to establish a landing point for the panga boat. On August 11, 2010, other members of the alien smuggling conspiracy piloted

the boat from Mexico into United States waters, where they were apprehended. Gomez-Garcia further admitted that on board the panga boat was an aggravated felon who did not have the right to enter the United States. Gomez-Garcia admitted to participating in several other efforts to smuggle aliens into the United States from Mexico.

On March 3, 2011, the Honorable Dana M. Sabraw had sentenced Gomez-Garcia's live-in girlfriend, Monica Lopez, to serve 18 months' custody plus 2 years of supervised release. Judge Sabraw also ordered Lopez to pay \$6,000 in criminal forfeiture. On July 1, 2011, Judge Sabraw sentenced Carlos Morales-Yanez, another member of the conspiracy, to 37 months' custody plus 3 years of supervised release. In total, eight members of Gomez-Garcia's alien smuggling organization have pled guilty to alien smuggling charges.

United States Attorney Duffy praised the investigative efforts of the San Diego Field Office of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, as well as Border Patrol and Customs and Border Protection.

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 10CR3460-DMS

Carlos Gomez-Garcia
Monica Lopez
Carlos Morales-Yanez

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Conspiracy to Bring in Illegal Aliens for Financial Gain, To Transport Illegal Aliens, and Assist Certain Aliens to Enter – Title 18, United States Code, Section 371; Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii) and (v)(II), 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii), 1327

Criminal Forfeiture – Title 18, United States Code, Section 982; Title 31, United States Code, Section 5317

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations
United States Border Patrol
United States Customs and Border Protection