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BROTHERS SENTENCED IN DRUG TRAFFICKING CRIMES

Hammond, Indiana- The United States Attorney's Office announced the following:

Juan C. Ramirez-Fuentes, 32, and Jaimie Ramirez-Fuentes, 39, both of Hammond, Indiana, were sentenced by Chief Judge Philip Simon for the felony offenses of possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. Juan Ramirez Fuentes will serve 295 months imprisonment and 5 years of supervised release after being found guilty at trial in September 2011. Jaimie Ramirez-Fuentes will serve 120 months imprisonment and 5 years of supervised release after pleading guilty in October 2011.

On August 23, 2010, agents with the Department of Homeland Security, working in conjunction with investigators from the Cook County Sheriff's Department, conducted a consensual interview at the residence of Juan Ramirez-Fuentes. Juan Ramirez-Fuentes gave verbal and written consent to search his trailer. Agents found 27.2 grams of marijuana and 2 loaded handguns (which the defendant was not prohibited from possessing), ammunition, \$10,340 United States Currency, three scales, and a shoebox that contained white residue that tested positive for cocaine.

Agents then proceeded to speak with Juan's brother, Jaime Ramirez-Fuentes. Jaime Ramirez-Fuentes indicated that he was illegally in the United States and had illegal firearms at his home. He gave verbal and written consent to search his home. Inside his residence, agents seized over 3,000 grams of methamphetamine and two loaded firearms (one of which was stolen), ammunition, \$2,647.12 in cash, plastic wrapping materials, one digital scale and drug packaging materials from his bedroom. One of the loaded firearms had a rock of methamphetamine lying on top of it when agents seized it.

Juan Ramirez-Fuentes admitted ownership of the marijuana and scales found in his home. Juan admitted to receiving the methamphetamine from a friend about three weeks prior to his arrest. He did not want to store the methamphetamine at his house for fear of being robbed, so he hid it at his brother, Jaime's, apartment instead. He admitted to hiding two guns at Jaime's apartment so that his brother would have protection. He also admitted to moving a kilogram of

cocaine for the friend about one month prior and delivering a bag containing \$30,000 in payment.

Jaime Ramirez-Fuentes stated that he knowingly obtained two guns from his brother, Juan, who asked him to hold them for safekeeping approximately one year prior to their arrest. He admitted that the guns were loaded when he received them from Juan. He admitted to knowingly storing the methamphetamine found in his bedroom for Juan, who asked him to hold it for him approximately one month prior to their arrest.

“Homeland Security Investigations will vigilantly and aggressively investigate drug trafficking and the violence that goes along with this insidious crime,” said Gary Hartwig, special agent in charge of HSI Chicago. “These sentences are a testament to that effort. We are committed to making our communities safer and will continue to partner with other law enforcement agencies to achieve that goal.”

This case was the result of an investigation by the U.S. Immigration Custom Office of Homeland Security Investigations, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Cook County Sheriff’s Department. This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jennifer Chang-Adiga.