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News Release

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Three plead guilty to conspiring to possess with intent to distribute methamphetamine

Earlier today in federal court in St. Paul, three men pleaded guilty to conspiring to possess with intent to distribute 500 or more grams of methamphetamine. Aldolfo Alonso Medina, age 33, of St. Paul; Juan Carlos Aguilar-Mora, age 27, address unknown; and Miguel Farid Soto-Chavez, age 24, of Toppenish, Washington, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy. The defendants, who were indicted on February 8, 2011, entered their pleas before United States District Court Judge Donovan W. Frank.

In their plea agreements, the defendants admitted that on January 10, 2011, they conspired to possess with intent to distribute 500 or more grams of methamphetamine. On January 6, 2011, federal agents seized approximately 21.2 pounds of pure methamphetamine that had been hidden in a secret compartment of a vehicle in California. The vehicle's driver, who had been recruited by the supplier to drive the Ford F-150 truck to Minnesota, was working with federal agents. Authorities substituted false methamphetamine for the real drugs, and the driver then made arrangements to deliver the goods to Medina at a St. Paul motel. Soto-Chavez subsequently picked the truck up at the motel, followed by a second vehicle driven by Medina. Aguilar-Mora was a passenger in Medina's truck. Soto-Chavez drove to a South St. Paul residence and parked the truck in the garage.

Later that evening, another vehicle drove up to the garage, parked for a short period of time, and then drove away again with Aguilar-Mora as a passenger. Police stopped the vehicle and found a suitcase filled with the fake methamphetamine. Aguilar-Mora was immediately arrested. At the same time, police also stopped Medina and Soto-Chavez, who were following Aguilar-Mora in a Toyota Tundra. Medina and Soto-Chavez also were arrested, and officers found fake methamphetamine in Medina's pocket.

Soto-Chavez subsequently pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute 50 or

more grams of methamphetamine in connection with an unrelated case. Soto-Chavez was indicted in that case on February 24, 2011. He admitted that from 2008 through April 20, 2010, he conspired with others to distribute 50 or more grams of methamphetamine. Soto-Chavez specifically admitted distributing methamphetamine ranging between 27.5 and 111.5 grams on four occasions between February 5 and April 20, 2010.

For their crimes, the men face a potential maximum penalty of life in prison. Judge Frank will determine their sentences at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled. This case is the result of an investigation by the DEA, the St. Paul Police Department, and the South St. Paul Police Department. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas M. Hollenhorst.

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