



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Carter M. Stewart
Southern District of Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 03, 2010
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/ohs>

CONTACT: Fred Alverson
614-469-5715

LIFE SENTENCE IMPOSED FOR LEADER OF MULTI-STATE MARIJUANA TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION

Criminal enterprise trafficked more than 20 tons in three years

COLUMBUS –Rafael Hernandez-Carrillo, 31, of Columbus, Ohio was sentenced in U.S. District Court today to life in prison for leading a marijuana trafficking network responsible for distributing more than 22 tons of marijuana between 2005 and 2008, earning more than \$10 million a year from the operation.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Anthony C. Marotta, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Madison County Sheriff James P. Sabin, Franklin County Sheriff Jim Karnes, and other agencies participating in the Southwest Border Initiative Task Force announced the sentence handed down today by Senior U.S. District Judge James L. Graham.

Judge Graham also ordered Hernandez Carrillo to forfeit \$263,956 in cash seized during the investigation, two pieces of real estate and 48 pieces of jewelry.

A jury convicted Hernandez-Carrillo on September 17, 2009 of one count of operating a continuing criminal enterprise, and one count of trafficking more than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana.

During the trial, witnesses testified that Hernandez-Carrillo received large quantities of marijuana from Sonora, Mexico and that he was directly connected to Mexican drug cartels. After the marijuana arrived in Columbus, it was shipped to Dayton, Mansfield and Detroit for distribution.

Task Force officers conducted more than 32 search warrants at houses, apartments, warehouses, and storage lockers during the course of the four-year investigation. During one of those searches, agents found a religious statue in a house Hernandez-Carrillo occupied. During the trial, one witness testified that the statue was to ward off law enforcement from the residence.

Hernandez-Carrillo was arrested on February 27, 2008. A search of his residence recovered more than \$500,000 in jewelry and \$230,811 in cash.

Others charged as part of the investigation have pleaded guilty to crimes for their role in the drug trafficking organization. Dae Won Lee pleaded guilty on August 8, 2008 to conspiracy and will be sentenced in December. Larry Ray Nelms pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy and was sentenced June 11, 2010 to 15 years imprisonment. Francisco Corella, aka Bash, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy and was sentenced in July 2010 to 40 months imprisonment. Angel

Luis Colon Padilla pleaded guilty in a related federal case in New Jersey and was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. Andre McGary of Cincinnati pleaded guilty on March 12, 2009 to one count of conspiracy. He was sentenced January 7, 2010 to five years' imprisonment.

Stewart commended the cooperative investigation by the DEA agents and Southwest Border Initiative Task Force officers, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorney David Bosley, who prosecuted the case.

###