



Department of Justice

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EL PASO DRUG TRAFFICKER SENTENCED TO 320 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON

In El Paso earlier today, Samuel Gomez, age 48, was sentenced to 320 months in federal prison for engaging in widespread drug trafficking and related crimes of violence announced United States Attorney Robert Pitman, Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent in Charge Joseph D. Arabit and Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge Mark Morgan.

In addition to the prison term, United States District Judge David Briones ordered that Gomez pay a \$10,000 fine, forfeit more than \$57,335 to the Government and be placed under supervised release for a period of five years after completing his prison term. In May, a federal jury convicted Gomez of one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute more than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana; possession with intent to distribute more than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana; and, possession with intent to distribute more than 100 kilograms of marijuana.

Testimony presented at trial revealed that for approximately five years beginning in 2007, Gomez was ultimately responsible for the trafficking of more than 7,300 pounds of marijuana. Testimony also revealed Gomez's propensity for committing revengeful acts of violence whenever his drug loads were stolen, or lost under suspicious circumstances, including assault, kidnapping, arson and drive-by shootings.

"This sentencing should send a strong and unified message that drug trafficking will not be tolerated in our community, and those who commit these offenses will be brought to justice," stated DEA-El Paso Division Special Agent in Charge Joseph M. Arabit.

Gomez is one of 11 defendants charged in connection with this scheme. Ten have entered guilty pleas. Nine have received prison sentences, including Gomez. Co-defendant Joel Luna is awaiting sentencing after pleading guilty to unlawful use of a communication facility. Co-defendant Alex Drury, who was arrested last month, faces the conspiracy charge. No further court dates have been scheduled.

"Today's sentencing represents the successful culmination of the joint FBI/DEA Strike Force investigation into a drug trafficking organization operating in El Paso, Texas. This investigation enforces our relationship with law enforcement partners to accomplish a unified objective of disrupting and dismantling a drug trafficking organization which operates for the Sinaloa Mexican Drug Trafficking Organization. The FBI will continue to work in collaboration with our valued law enforcement partners to investigate and seek prosecution of individuals who choose to participate in drug trafficking enterprises," stated FBI-El Paso Division Special Agent in Charge Mark Morgan.

This case resulted from an investigation by the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) Strike Force Group I in El Paso which is comprised of agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations, United States Marshals Service and the United States Border Patrol.

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