



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Robert Pitman, U.S. Attorney**

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**TWO WEST TEXAS MEN FACE FEDERAL PRISON  
FOR TRAFFICKING AN ESTIMATED \$1 MILLION WORTH OF MARIJUANA**

**United States Attorney Robert Pitman** announced that two west Texas men face lengthy mandatory federal prison sentences after a jury in Pecos, Texas, convicted them of federal drug charges.

Late Friday, the jury convicted 28-year-old Espigmenio Hernandez, Jr., of Odessa, Texas, of possession with intent to distribute over 100 kilograms, but less than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana. Jurors also convicted 27-year-old Hector Manuel Armendariz, Jr., of Presidio, Texas, of attempted possession with intent to distribute over 100 kilograms of marijuana. As a result, Hernandez faces between ten years and life in federal prison; Armendariz, between five and 40 years in federal prison. Both defendants remain in federal custody pending sentencing in Pecos on May 21, 2012, before U.S. District Judge Robert Junell.

Testimony during the two-day trial revealed that on December 6, 2011, U.S. Border Patrol agents seized a dump truck, being driven by Armendariz, which had a false bed covered with Bentonite at the Highway 118 checkpoint south of Alpine, Texas. Authorities discovered approximately 1,336 pounds, or 606 kilograms, of marijuana hidden under the Bentonite. The estimated street value of the marijuana seized was \$1,068,800. Testimony also revealed that Armendariz was attempting to transport the vehicle and its cargo to Hernandez in Odessa who would collect the marijuana for further distribution.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration--Alpine and their High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force with assistance from the U.S. Border Patrol and the Ector County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney James Miller, Jr. is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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