



## United States Attorney William J. Ihlenfeld, II Northern District of West Virginia

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### **PENNSYLVANIA MAN CHARGED WITH KIDNAPPING, SEXUALLY ASSAULTING WHEELING WOMAN**

WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA – A Pennsylvania man has been charged with kidnapping a low-functioning Wheeling woman and taking her across state lines to engage in illegal sexual activity for four days in July.

According to U.S. Attorney William J. Ihlenfeld, II, Jesús TAPIA, age 37, of Washington, Pennsylvania, was indicted yesterday by a federal grand jury in Clarksburg with five felony counts related to the kidnapping and sexual assault of a 19-year old Wheeling woman. The indictment alleges that TAPIA and another person conspired to kidnap the woman from a street near her home and take her to Washington County, PA, where she was held for four days so that TAPIA and others could have sexual relations with her against her will.

The victim went missing on July 7, 2012, and subsequently a group of concerned citizens worked together to prepare a flyer and assist authorities in the search.

“The F.B.I. did a marvelous job in identifying a suspect, in gathering evidence, and in making an arrest in this case,” said Ihlenfeld. “We are fortunate to have outstanding agents in the Wheeling F.B.I. Office who help to protect our most vulnerable citizens.”

According to Ihlenfeld, other individuals remain under investigation and may be charged with similar offenses.

TAPIA, who presently is being held at the Northern Regional Jail in Moundsville without bond, faces up to life in prison if convicted. TAPIA is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

The F.B.I. was assisted by the Wheeling Police Department and the Harmony House Child Advocacy Center in the investigation. The case will be prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert H. McWilliams, Jr.

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