

For Immediate Release
July 20, 2011

**DEMING WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO
FEDERAL MARIJUANA CHARGE**

LAS CRUCES – On July 19, 2011, in Las Cruces federal court, **Crystal Pierro**, 32, of Deming, New Mexico, pled guilty to an indictment charging her with possession with the intent to distribute marijuana. At sentencing, Pierro faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and two years of supervised release. Pierro, who was arrested on May 15, 2011, remains in federal custody pending her sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Pierro was arrested after law enforcement officers at the Columbus Port of Entry in Luna County, New Mexico, found marijuana in the mini-van Pierro was driving. According to the criminal complaint filed in the case, United States Customs and Border Protection officers discovered the marijuana after a drug detecting canine alerted to Pierro's van. During yesterday's plea hearing, Pierro admitted that, on May 15, 2011, she drove a white mini-van into the Columbus Port of Entry with eleven kilograms of marijuana concealed behind the dashboard.

The case was investigated by the United States Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Michael D. Nammar.

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