

For Immediate Release
October 4, 2011

**NAVAJO WOMAN SENTENCED FOR FEDERAL
CHILD ABUSE CONVICTION**

ALBUQUERQUE – This afternoon in Albuquerque federal court, a United States District Judge sentenced **Kendra Renae Chester**, 24, to a 35-day term of imprisonment with credit for time served. The Judge also placed Chester on supervised release for one year with a special condition that Chester must remain in home detention and is allowed to leave the residence only during the hours of 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Chester, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Gallup, New Mexico, was ordered to participate in alcohol counseling.

Immediately before she was sentenced, Chester entered a guilty plea to an indictment charging her with abandonment or abuse of a child, an offense that carried a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment and a year of supervised release.

Court records reflect that, on December 2, 2010, Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety (NNDPS) officers responded to a report of a roll-over accident near Refuge Rock Road and Twin Butte Road, a location near Mentmore, New Mexico, on the Navajo Indian Reservation. Upon arrival, the officers noted that the two occupants of the overturned vehicle, Chester and her four and one half month old son, had sustained injuries. Witnesses reported driving past the vehicle involved in the crash about three miles east of the crash site. Later, the same vehicle later passed them westbound on Refuge Rock Road. The vehicle was traveling at a high rate of speed and the witnesses lost sight of the vehicle when it went over a hill. When the witnesses reached the crest of the hill, they observed that the vehicle had over-turned, and saw Chester crawl out of the driver's side of the vehicle. They also heard a child cry and they found an infant on the roadway. Subsequent investigation revealed that the infant had been ejected

from a car seat in the vehicle. NNDPS officers noted that while the seat belt appeared to be working properly, the car seat was not properly restrained by the seat belt. Chester was determined to be driving the vehicle while intoxicated. The infant was treated at a hospital and did not suffer any life threatening injuries.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the case was investigated by the NNDPS, Crownpoint Division, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Charles L Barth.

###

11-408