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PRESS RELEASE

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**LAS CRUCES MAN CHARGED WITH DISTRIBUTING
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

Juan Larry Barela, 38, of Las Cruces, New Mexico, has been charged with knowingly receiving, distributing and possessing child pornography. Earlier today, Barela made his initial appearance before United States Magistrate Carmen E. Garza in Las Cruces.

The complaint alleges that on July 25, 2010, officers assigned to the New Mexico State Police Online Predator Unit searched an online peer-to-peer (“P2P”) Gnutella network for the internet protocol (“IP”) addresses of computers that were offering to share files that were known by law enforcement to contain images of child pornography. According to the complaint, users who install Gnutella, a P2P file sharing software, on their computers can share selected files on their computers with other users via the internet. The complaint further alleges that officers downloaded an image of child pornography from an IP address assigned to Barela’s Comcast account. According to the

complaint, on September 10, 2010, officers executing a state search warrant at Barela's residence found additional images of child pornography on a laptop computer.

Barela, who was arrested on October 13, 2010, on a federal firearm charge, has been in custody since his arrest. If convicted of receiving or distributing child pornography, Barela faces not less than 5 years of imprisonment and up to life imprisonment, and a lifetime of supervised release.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the child pornography charges against Barela stem from an investigation led by the New Mexico Attorney General's Office, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Las Cruces Police Department.

The case is being prosecuted by Jake Wishard, Assistant United States Attorney, as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The case also was brought as part of the New Mexico Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force's (ICAC Task Force) mission to locate, track, and capture Internet child sexual predators and Internet child pornographers in New Mexico. There are 61

federal, state and local law enforcement agencies associated with the ICAC Task Force, which is funded by a grant administered by the NMAGO. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact federal or local law enforcement.

A criminal complaint is only an accusation. All criminal defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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