

For Immediate Release  
April 7, 2011

**COUSINS FROM BURNHAM, NM PLEAD GUILTY TO  
FEDERAL SECOND DEGREE MURDER CHARGES**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court in Albuquerque, **Tyrus Begaye**, 34, and **Darnell Begay**, 36, entered guilty pleas to second degree murder charges under plea agreements with the United States Attorney's Office during separate hearings in the same case. Under the terms of their respective plea agreements, each man faces a term of imprisonment of 151 to 188 months at sentencing. Both men have been in federal custody since they were arrested on February 8, 2010, and will remain detained until their sentencing hearings, which have yet to be scheduled.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Tyrus Begaye and Darnell Begay pleaded guilty to killing Peyton Hogue on February 6, 2010 in Burnham, New Mexico, a small community on the Navajo Indian Reservation. According to court records, Tyrus Begaye and Darnell Begay are cousins. They are enrolled members of the Navajo Nation who reside in Burnham. Their victim, Mr. Hogue, was also a member of the Navajo Nation.

According to the criminal complaints filed in the case, shortly after midnight on February 6, 2010, officers of the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety (NNDPS) were notified that a dead man, later identified as Mr. Hogue, had been found near the residence of Darnell Begay. Mr. Hogue had sustained extensive trauma to his face and neck and had small puncture wounds in his abdomen. On February 8, 2010, at the urging of relatives and community leaders, Tyrus Begaye and Darnell Begay walked into the NNDPS office in Shiprock and made voluntary statements to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and NNDPS. Each man independently said that the two cousins beat Mr. Hogue with their fists and kicked him in the head. Each man

also stated that Mr. Hogue was sitting up and coughing up blood when they departed from the scene of the attack.

In his plea agreement, Tyrus Begaye admitted killing Mr. Hogue, a man unknown to him at the time, shortly after midnight on February 6, 2010 by striking him with his fists and feet. He further stated that, after he began the attack on Mr. Hogue, Darnell Begay joined in the attack. In his plea agreement, Darnell Begay also admitted participating in the murder of Mr. Hogue by assisting his cousin, Tyrus Begaye, in beating Mr. Hogue. Both men stated that Mr. Hogue was alive and coughing up blood when they departed the scene of their attack on Mr. Hogue, and subsequently learned that Mr. Hogue died from the injuries he sustained during the attack.

The case was investigated by the FBI and NNDPS, Shiprock Division, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Roberto D. Ortega.

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