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## **THREE SULPHUR, LA INDIVIDUALS SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT FOR TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS**

### *Defendants Part of Large Scale Operation to Transport Illegal Aliens*

**LAKE CHARLES, La.** - Members of a large scale illegal alien transportation operation based in Sulphur, La., were sentenced in federal court yesterday, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced. U. S. District Judge Patricia Minaldi sentenced Carolyn Joyce Metcalf, 62, to 30 months (2 ½ years) in prison, followed by three years supervised release; Terri Lynn Fields, 41, to 27 months (2 years, 3 months) in prison, followed by three years supervised release; and Jean Morgan Vincent, 59, to three years probation, for conspiracy to transport illegal aliens.

Metcalf, Fields and Vincent were indicted last year, along with three others, for conspiracy to transport illegal aliens, and pleaded guilty in May 2009. Metcalf, Fields and Vincent admitted that they conspired with their co-defendants to transport illegal aliens from the Texas and Mexico border area to other locations within Texas, that they knew the aliens came into the United States illegally, and the transportation of these illegal aliens was with the intent to further their unlawful presence in the United States. Metcalf, Fields and Vincent were involved in a conspiracy with their co-defendants that resulted in the organization transporting hundreds of illegal aliens on a regular basis since 2005.

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Two co-defendants have previously pled guilty. Joan Comeaux, 56, pleaded guilty in October 2008, and is scheduled to be sentenced on December 10, 2009. Comeaux, the ring leader of this organization, admitted that she instructed her co-defendants in this case on the procedure to transport illegal aliens, and along with her sister, Carolyn Metcalf, transported illegal aliens.

Timothy Gene Jones, 40, pleaded guilty in May 2009 and was sentenced on September 3, 2009, to one year imprisonment, followed by three years supervised release. Jones admitted that he was recruited as a driver and made trips to Texas to pick up and transport the illegal aliens. The recruiting process took place in the Western District of Louisiana.

U. S. Attorney Donald Washington stated: “Any person who assists an alien to illegally enter the United States is in violation of the law and should be punished. We will continue to aggressively pursue those who assist aliens to illegally enter and remain in the United States.”

Special Agent in Charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Investigations in New Orleans, Michael A. Holt stated: “This case is a perfect example of the outstanding cooperation between ICE and our sister law enforcement agencies. Because of positive inter-agency cooperation, human trafficking and smuggling criminal organizations are discovering how difficult it is for them to hide their illegal activities from authorities. We are dedicated to identifying and dismantling these types of illicit operations wherever and whenever we find them.”

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. United States Sentencing Guidelines established by the United States Congress and the United States Sentencing Commission are only used as guidelines by the judge in determining the appropriate sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was investigated by the Office of Immigrations and Custom Enforcement, Lake Charles, LA (ICE), FBI, Border Patrol, Louisiana State Police, Sulphur Police Department and Calcasieu Parish Sheriff’s Office, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney James T. McManus.

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