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SULPHUR, LA WOMAN SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT FOR TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS

Ringleader of Large-Scale Operation to Transport Illegal Aliens Gets 51 Months

LAKE CHARLES, LA.: The ringleader of a large-scale operation to transport illegal aliens was sentenced in federal court today, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced. United States District Judge Patricia Minaldi sentenced Joan Comeaux, age 55, to 51 months in prison for conspiracy to transport illegal aliens.

Comeaux was indicted in August 2008, and pleaded guilty in October 2008. Comeaux admitted that she conspired with her co-defendants listed in the indictment to transport illegal aliens from the Texas and Mexico border area to other locations within Texas, that she 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. Comeaux further admitted that she instructed her co-defendants in this case on the procedure to transport the illegal aliens, and along with her sister, Carolyn Metcalf, transported illegal aliens. Comeaux and her co-defendants were involved in a conspiracy that resulted in the organization transporting hundreds of illegal aliens on a regular basis since 2005.

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 was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney James T. McManus.

(See Fact Sheet Attached)

FACT SHEET:

CAROLYN JOYCE METCALF, age 62, of Sulphur, La., pleaded guilty in May 2009 and was sentenced in October 2009 to 30 months (2 ½ years) in prison, followed by three years supervised release.

TERRI LYNN FIELDS, age 41, of Sulphur, La., pleaded guilty in May 2009 and was sentenced in October 2009 to 27 months (2 years, 3 months) in prison, followed by three years supervised release.

JEAN MORGAN VINCENT, age 59, of Sulphur, La., pleaded guilty in May 2009 and was sentenced in October 2009 to three years probation.

TIMOTHY GENE JONES, age 40, of Sulphur, La., pleaded guilty in May 2009 and was sentenced in September 2009 to one year imprisonment, followed by three years supervised release.

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