

# Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.  
Western District of New York

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CONTACT: BARBARA BURNS  
PHONE: (716) 843-5817  
FAX: (716) 551-3051

## **EL SALVADOR MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ENTICEMENT OF MINOR**

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Jose Francisco Pineda, 32, of El Salvador, pleaded guilty before Chief U.S. District Judge William M. Skretny, to coercion and enticement of a minor to engage in sexual activity. The charge carries a maximum sentence of life in prison, a fine of \$250,000, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Marie P. Grisanti, who is handling the case, stated that in November of 2008, the defendant, who was residing in Los Angeles, California, began communicating online with a 12 year old minor female who was residing in New York State. Pineda, who was 28 years old at that time, misrepresented his age to the minor female, purporting to be 17 years old. At various times between 2008 and June of 2010, the defendant and the minor victim communicated over the internet and the telephone, conversations that were often sexual in nature. During some of these conversations, Pineda asked the victim to take sexually explicit photographs of herself and send them to him.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), 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.projectsafchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafchildhood.gov).

The plea is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Christopher M. Piehota, Special Agent in Charge and the North Tonawanda Police Department under the direction of

Chief Randy Szukala. FBI agents from the Central District of California also assisted in the investigation.

Sentencing is scheduled for May 4, 2012, at 9:00 a.m. EST, in Buffalo, N.Y., before Judge Skretny.

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