

For Immediate Release
August 12, 2011

FORMER STATE PROBATION AND PAROLE SUPERVISOR
FACES FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court in Albuquerque, **Larry Franco**, 56, of Farmington, New Mexico, made his initial appearance on a six-count indictment charging him with child pornography offenses. The indictment, which was returned by a federal grand jury on August 9, 2011, was unsealed on August 11, 2011 following Franco's arrest. During this morning's proceedings, the court scheduled Franco's arraignment and a detention hearing on August 15, 2011. Franco is temporarily detained pending his detention hearing.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the indictment charges Franco with two counts of receipt of visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, and four counts of possession of matter containing visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. At the time of the offenses alleged in the indictment, Franco was the supervisor of the sex offender unit of the Probation and Parole Division of the New Mexico Corrections Department in Farmington. If convicted of the charges in the indictment, Franco faces a maximum penalty of imprisonment for not less than 5 years and not more than 20 years and a lifetime of supervised release. Franco also will be required to register as a sex offender.

According to the indictment, Franco allegedly received child pornography in January 2011 and April 5, 2009, and possessed child pornography between October 2007 through June 2011. Franco allegedly committed all six offenses in San Juan County, New Mexico.

The case was investigated by the Farmington Police Department and the New Mexico Attorney General's Office with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Charlyn E. Rees. The case was brought 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 whose mission it is 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 Task Force, which is funded by a grant administered by the New Mexico Attorney General's Office. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact federal or local law enforcement.

Charges in indictments are only accusations. All criminal defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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