



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

PHOENIX WOMAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR SMUGGLING SIX-YEAR OLD BOY

TUCSON, Ariz. – Lucia Guadalupe Leyva, 22, of Phoenix, was sentenced in Tucson today by U.S. District Judge David C. Bury to 12 months in federal prison. Leyva pleaded guilty on September 3, 2008 to conspiracy to transport an illegal alien.

Leyva admitted that on December 11, 2007, she tried to enter the U.S. from Mexico through the pedestrian lane of the Nogales, Ariz., Port of Entry. She was carrying her 3-month-old son and escorting a 6-year-old boy. She claimed both boys were her sons, and presented her own sons' Arizona birth certificates on their behalf. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection official became suspicious because one boy looked older than the age on the birth certificate. Leyva then admitted that she was not related to the older boy and the birth certificate she presented did not belong to him. Leyva knew the boy had no legal authority to enter the United States, and she was smuggling and transporting him to Phoenix for his mother, whom she only knew as "Gabriela."

The smuggled child was turned over to the custody of the Mexican Department of Family Services (the Mexican equivalent of U.S. Child Protective Services) and has been reunited with his family.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The prosecution was handled by Mary Sue Feldmeier, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-0066-TUC-DCB-(JJM)
RELEASE NUMBER: 2009-003(Leyva)

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