



Department of Justice

R. Booth Goodwin II, United States Attorney

Southern District of West Virginia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 23, 2010
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/wvs/>

CONTACT: Tracy Dorsey Chapman
800-659-8726*(304)345-2200
Tracy.Chapman@usdoj.gov

**MEXICAN NATIONAL PLEADS GUILTY TO
ILLEGALLY RE-ENTERING THE UNITED STATES**

Previously Deported for Smuggling Aliens into the United States

CHARLESTON, W. Va.– A Mexican national previously convicted of smuggling illegal aliens into the United States pleaded guilty yesterday to illegally re-entering the country, after being convicted of an aggravated felony–alien smuggling. Israel Gonzalez, 28, of Veracruz, Mexico, was apprehended by West Virginia authorities following a traffic stop in March of this year. The Kanawha County Sheriff's Department and the West Virginia State Police conducted a traffic stop of a van occupied by seven passengers in South Charleston. Requests for identification revealed that Gonzalez, a passenger in the van, and another individual were illegal aliens. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agents were contacted, and they took custody of both illegal aliens. Subsequent record and fingerprint searches revealed that Gonzalez had previously been convicted of alien smuggling in the Western District of Texas. As a result of that federal conviction, Gonzalez was removed from the country after completing his sentence in Texas. At his plea hearing, Gonzalez, through a signed stipulation, admitted he illegally re-entered the United States.

Gonzalez is scheduled to be sentenced on November 15, 2010, before United States District Judge Thomas E. Johnston. He faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Gonzalez is also subject to deportation upon the completion of his sentence.

The Kanawha County Sheriff's Department, West Virginia State Police and Bureau of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement jointly conducted the investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Erik S. Goes is handling the prosecution.

###