



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FEBRUARY 18, 2003**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MEXICAN CITIZEN CHARGED WITH TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS FOLLOWING FATAL CRASH NEAR JOPLIN**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Mexican citizen was charged in federal court today with illegally transporting aliens within the United States. The federal charge follows a fatality accident on Interstate 44 near Joplin, Mo., on Feb. 12, 2003, in which two Mexican citizens were killed and 10 more were taken to local hospitals with injuries.

**Horacio Flores-Flores**, 28, a citizen of Mexico, is charged with transporting four Mexican citizens, whom he knew to be in the United States illegally, for the purpose of private financial gain, according to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Springfield this afternoon.

On Feb. 12, 2003, Graves explained, 12 Mexican citizens – who were later determined to be undocumented aliens in the United States illegally – were involved in a fatality accident when the 1990 Chevrolet Astro van in which they were riding crashed on Interstate 44 near Joplin.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the federal criminal complaint, **Flores-Flores** was transporting the 11 undocumented aliens from Phoenix, Ariz. to Grand Rapids, Mich., when the accident occurred. **Flores-Flores** was allegedly going to be paid \$125 per person, a total of \$1,375, upon arrival in Grand Rapids, in addition to \$300 for gas and \$100 for food that he had been provided. According to another affidavit filed with the court, at the time of the accident **Flores-Flores** was having one of the undocumented aliens drive the van.

Graves cautioned that the charge contained in the complaint is simply an accusation, and is not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charge must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

The case was investigated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)