



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEXICAN CITIZEN SENTENCED FOR TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS FOLLOWING FATAL CRASH NEAR JOPLIN

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Mexican citizen was sentenced in federal court today for transporting illegal aliens within the United States. The sentencing follows a fatal 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, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., this morning to three years and five months in federal prison without parole.

On March 20, 2003, **Flores-Flores** pleaded guilty to a four-count indictment admitting that he transported Mexican citizens, whom he knew to be in the United States illegally, for the purpose of private financial gain. The indictment was returned by a federal grand jury on March 5, 2003, in Springfield.

Flores-Flores was originally charged with transporting illegal aliens in a federal criminal complaint that was filed on Feb. 18, 2003.

On Feb. 12, 2003, Graves explained, **Flores-Flores** and 11 other 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** admitted that he was going to be paid \$125 for each person he transported, 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.

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

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