



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FRAUD DEFENDANT SENTENCED TO 11 YEARS, 3 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that Carlos Rene Machuca, 39, of Midland, was sentenced to a total of 135 months in prison today in U.S. District Court in Midland for bank fraud and conspiracy to commit bank fraud, four counts of money laundering, and three counts of aggravated identity theft. In addition to the prison term, United States District Judge Robert Junell ordered that Machuca pay more than \$600,000 in restitution to his victims and serve a 5-year term of supervised release when he is released from prison. Judge Junell also ordered the forfeiture of Machuca's interest in several vehicles that were purchased with the proceeds of the fraud, including a 2005 Corvette.

Machuca, who has been in custody since his arrest in March of this year, was found guilty by a federal jury on June 10, 2008 of all nine counts with which he was charged. At the trial, the evidence presented by the government showed that Machuca and his co-defendant, Miriam Veronica Moreno, had used a scheme to fraudulently execute bank checks belonging to Western Chrysler of Hobbs, New Mexico, where Moreno was employed during the scheme. Machuca had also worked at the car dealership previously, and had met Moreno during that time. In all, the fraudulent scheme resulted in the theft of more than \$450,000.

Moreno is currently serving a 21-month federal prison term after pleading guilty to the conspiracy charge and testifying against Machuca at his trial.

The case was investigated by the Midland office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jeff Parras.

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