



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ANOTHER CHILD SMUGGLER SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR 15 MONTHS

TUCSON, Ariz. – Etelmira Lara-Montes, 38, of Nogales, Son., Mex., was sentenced here today to 15 months in prison by U.S. District Judge Raner C. Collins. Lara-Montes pleaded guilty on December 20, 2007 to Conspiracy to Transport an Illegal Alien for Profit.

Lara-Montes attempted to enter the United States on October 19, 2007, at the DeConcini Port of Entry in Nogales, Ariz. with a 7-year-old girl. She presented a laser visa for the child and claimed the girl was her godchild. Inspectors became suspicious because the girl did not resemble the child pictured in the laser visa, and determined that the child was actually a Mexican citizen with no authorization to be in the U.S. Lara-Montes admitted she did not know the girl's name or her parents. She said a woman she knew only by a first name had hired her for \$100 to take the child across the border and deliver the child to an unknown woman in a white car who would be waiting for her outside a Nogales fast food restaurant. The woman who hired her also supplied her with the laser visa to use for the child.

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 her family.

Lara-Montes, a Mexican citizen with a laser visa (formerly known as a border crossing card) authorizing entry to the United States, is also pending removal proceedings from the U.S. as a result of this conviction.

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

CASE NUMBER: CR-07-1910-TUC-RCC
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