



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DRIVER CHARGED IN SECOND FATAL ROLLOVER CRASH IN SOUTHERN ARIZONA IN ONE WEEK

TUCSON, Ariz. - Francisco Javier Morquecho-Valdez, 19, of Mexico was arrested and charged with one count of Transporting Illegal Aliens for Profit Resulting in Death. He made his initial appearance in Tucson federal court this afternoon and is scheduled for Detention and Preliminary hearings on Wednesday, April 16, 2008 at 10:30 a.m. Two illegal aliens he was driving died at the scene of a crash that occurred on Sunday, April 13, 2008. Others sustained serious injuries. This is the second fatal rollover crash in southern Arizona in a week. On April 7th a rollover near Benson, Ariz. left one woman dead and many others hospitalized. An illegal alien was also charged in that case.

This most recent rollover occurred on Sunday, April 13, 2008. Federal agents responded to a call for assistance from the Arizona Department of Public Safety regarding a single vehicle accident in which two passengers died. Two additional passengers suffered serious bodily injury as a result of the accident. The driver, later identified as Francisco Javier Morquecho-Valdez, fled but was apprehended a short time later by Border Patrol. The vehicle, a pickup truck, contained 11 other passengers. All passengers and Morquecho were determined to be citizens of Mexico and present in the U.S. illegally. Some of the illegal aliens in the group stated that they had crossed into the U.S. on April 13, 2008 near Naco, Ariz., had walked north through the desert and were picked up by Morquecho driving the pickup truck. Four of the material witnesses identified Morquecho as the driver and accompanied him in the cab of the truck. Another witness stated that he was to pay \$2,500 as a smuggling fee and his final destination was New York. The criminal complaint alleges that Morquecho admitted that he was the driver of the pick up truck when it crashed.

A criminal complaint is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. A conviction for Transporting Illegal Aliens for Profit Resulting in Death carries a maximum penalty of life in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, the assigned judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Border Patrol, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Arizona Department of Public Safety. The prosecution is being handled by Angela Woolridge, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: 08-6124M
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