



*Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Friday, June 20, 2008

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## **MEXICAN WOMAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR SMUGGLING 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL**

TUCSON, Ariz. – Zuilma Jannette Lopez-Pina, 28, of Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced here today by U.S. District Judge Raner C. Collins to 15 months in federal prison. Lopez-Pina pleaded guilty on March 28, 2008 to conspiracy to transport an illegal alien for financial gain.

Lopez-Pina admitted that on July 17, 2007, she attempted entry to the United States from Mexico via the pedestrian lane at the Port of Entry in Nogales, Ariz. with a 9-year-old female undocumented alien. Lopez-Pina presented her own daughter's laser visa for the girl and claimed the girl was her daughter. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection official became suspicious because the photograph on her daughter's visa did not resemble the girl accompanying her. Lopez-Pina admitted she was not related to the girl, did not know the girl's parents, and was going to receive \$800 for smuggling and transporting the girl to Tucson via shuttle. Lopez-Pina was instructed to give the girl to someone she would meet in Tucson.

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.

Lopez-Pina, a Mexican citizen with a laser visa 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 07-1459-TUC-RCC-HCE  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-164(Lopez-Pina)

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