



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, November 5, 2008

For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

CANADIAN MAN FOUND GUILTY OF FALSELY CLAIMING TO BE U.S. CITIZEN

PHOENIX - Richard Steven Riess, 34, of Ontario, Canada, was found guilty of Perjury and False Claim of Citizenship today by a federal jury. The case was tried before U.S. District Judge Susan R. Bolton on November 4 and 5, 2008. Sentencing is set before Judge Bolton on February 2, 2009.

The evidence at trial showed that Riess made a false claim of U.S. citizenship before U.S. Immigration Judge Sean Keenan in 2007. On October 31, 2007, Riess appeared before Judge Keenan for a removal hearing. Riess swore under oath to tell the truth but during that hearing, he testified that he was a U.S. citizen and falsely claimed that his parents were born in the United States. The government was able to prove that he is a Canadian citizen through the use of passport and birth records.

A conviction for Perjury carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. A conviction for False Claim of U.S. Citizenship carries a maximum penalty of three years, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, Judge Bolton 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 leading to the guilty verdict was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The prosecution was handled by Mark Brnovich and Josh Parecki, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-0723-PHX-SRB
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-290(Riess)

###

For more information on the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, visit <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/az/>