



**PRESS RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Elizabeth M. Martinez  
Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney  
Public Affairs Officer  
[elizabeth.martinez@usdoj.gov](mailto:elizabeth.martinez@usdoj.gov)  
505.224.1469

**For Immediate Release**

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**DRUG COURT PARTICIPANT WILL SERVE FIFTEEN YEAR PRISON SENTENCE  
FOR FEDERAL METHAMPHETAMINE AND FIREARM CHARGES**

ALBUQUERQUE – Yesterday morning in federal court, **Bernando Hernandez**, 50, of Albuquerque, N.M., pled guilty to methamphetamine trafficking and firearms charges under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office. Under the terms of the plea agreement, Hernandez will be sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment. Hernandez has been in federal custody since his arrest on October 5, 2011, and will remain detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that, during yesterday's hearing, Hernandez entered guilty pleas to Counts 1 and 3 of a three-count superseding indictment charging him with (1) possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute; (2) possession of heroin with intent to distribute; and (3) possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. According to the indictment, on October 5, 2011, Hernandez possessed more than 50 grams of actual methamphetamine, more than a kilogram of heroin and a .380 semiautomatic pistol.

Court records reflect that Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) initiated an investigation into Hernandez on October 5, 2011, after an anonymous tipster reported that Hernandez had heroin in his residence in the South Valley of Albuquerque and that he was on probation. After HSI agents verified that Hernandez was on probation from a state case, officers of the Probation and Parole Division of the New Mexico Corrections Department conducted a probation inspection of Hernandez' residence to ascertain whether Hernandez was in violation of his conditions of probation. During the probation inspection of Hernandez's residence, probation officers, assisted by HSI agents and New Mexico State Police officers, confiscated approximately 88.5 grams of actual methamphetamine, more than a kilogram of heroin and a firearm.

In his plea agreement, Hernandez admitted that he was on state probation and was enrolled in drug court on October 5, 2011. He further admitted that, as a condition of participating in drug court, he was required to give his probation officer consent to search his

residence. As a result, on October 5, 2011, Hernandez permitted probation officers and HSI agents to search his residence where they found methamphetamine, heroin and a firearm.

Under the plea agreement, Count 2 of the superseding indictment, the heroin trafficking charge, will be dismissed after Hernandez is sentenced.

The case was investigated by HSI, the Probation and Parole Division of the New Mexico Corrections Department and the New Mexico State Police, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Lynn W.Y. Wang and Jeremy Pena.

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