



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**GANG MEMBER RECEIVES 102-MONTH PRISON SENTENCE  
FOR ARMED ROBBERY OF FAST FOOD RESTAURANT**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning, a federal judge sentenced Manuel Hernandez, 25, of Albuquerque, N.M., to a 102-month term of imprisonment for his conviction on federal firearms and Hobbs Act charges. Hernandez, an admitted member of the Northside Locos Gang, will be on supervised release for five years after he completes his prison sentence.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the charges against Hernandez arose out of his armed robbery of a Blake's Lotaburger Restaurant located in Albuquerque's North Valley on Oct. 23, 2010.

Court filings reflect that, on Oct. 23, 2010, Hernandez was under surveillance by the Albuquerque Police Department (APD) as a suspect in the armed robberies of several Blake's Lotaburger Restaurants. On that day, officers conducted surveillance as Hernandez entered the Blake's Lotaburger Restaurant at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Indian School. Once in the restaurant, Hernandez jumped over the counter, brandished a semi-automatic pistol at two female employees, and demanded that they put money from the cash register into Lotaburger bags. He then ordered the employees to take him to the restaurant's safe. While holding the employees at gunpoint, Hernandez demanded that they open the safe. Once the safe was open, Hernandez took two bags of currency from the safe and left the restaurant. Shortly thereafter, he was arrested by APD officers.

Hernandez initially was charged in state court but that case was dismissed after a federal criminal complaint, which charged Hernandez as a felon in possession of a firearm, was filed on Nov. 1, 2010. Hernandez has been in federal custody since that time. On Dec. 15, 2010, Hernandez was indicted and charged with (1) being a felon in possession of a firearm; (2) interfering with interstate commerce by robbery; and (3) using a firearm during a crime of violence. At the time, Hernandez was prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition because he previously had been convicted of armed robbery, conspiracy to commit armed robbery, and attempt to commit a felony in the Second Judicial District Court of New Mexico (Bernalillo County). Hernandez pled guilty to the indictment without the benefit of a plea agreement on Feb. 21, 2012.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives and APD, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jon K. Stanford.

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