



PRESS RELEASE

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**ROSWELL MAN SENTENCED TO 16 ½ YEARS FOR
UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM**

LAS CRUCES – U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that yesterday in federal court in Las Cruces, Raul Roger Orona, Jr., 29, of Roswell, N.M., was sentenced to 16 ½ years in prison for unlawfully possessing a firearm. After Orona completes his prison sentence, he will be on supervised release for five years.

On Nov. 17, 2011, a federal jury convicted Orona of violating 18 U.S.C. § 922(g), which makes it a crime for a convicted felon to possess a firearm. Orona, who was arrested on Feb. 22, 2011, has been in custody since his arrest.

According to the evidence at trial, on Jan. 6, 2011, a Roswell police officer stopped a vehicle in which Orona was a passenger. At the time of the traffic stop, there was an outstanding state arrest warrant for Orona for battery of a household member. The officer asked the occupants if there were any firearms in the vehicle. One of the passengers told the officer that there was a handgun in her purse. Officers searched the purse and found a .45 caliber pistol. The passenger initially claimed that the gun belonged to her. She later admitted that the firearm belonged to Orona, and that she had purchased the firearm at his request. Officers obtained the surveillance video from the pawn shop where the gun was purchased which showed that Orona was present when the handgun was purchased.

Orona was prohibited from possessing a firearm because he had two prior felony convictions: (1) shooting at or from a motor vehicle (Chaves County); and (2) extortion and aggravated assault (Chaves County).

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives and the Roswell Police Department, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Aaron O. Jordan.

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