



PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Elizabeth M. Martinez
Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney
Public Affairs Officer
elizabeth.martinez@usdoj.gov
505.224.1469

For Immediate Release

July 26, 2012

KEWA PUEBLO WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY
TO AGGRAVATED ASSAULT CHARGE

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court, Lolita Nieto, 35, pled guilty to an aggravated assault charge under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney’s Office. Nieto, a member and resident of Kewa Pueblo, faces up to 18 months of imprisonment at sentencing. She has been in federal custody since her arrest on March 9, 2012, and will remain detained pending her sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

Court records reflect that Nieto and co-defendant Pete Victor Reano, Jr., 47, also of Kewa Pueblo, were charged on March 1, 2012, in an indictment, and charged with assault resulting in serious bodily injury. The indictment charges Nieto and Reano with assaulting a woman on July 23, 2011, in Indian Country located within Sandoval County.

Today, Nieto pleaded guilty to an information charging her with aggravated assault. During the plea hearing, Nieto admitted that on July 23, 2011, she assaulted another woman by striking and kicking her without justifiable cause. Under the terms of her Nieto’s agreement, the indictment will be dismissed as against Nieto after she is sentenced.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Reano has entered a not guilty plea to the indictment, and is detained pending trial. An indictment is only an accusation, and a criminal defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services, Southern Pueblos Agency, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kyle T. Nayback.

###