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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former CBP Officer Sentenced to Prison for Alien Smuggling

McALLEN, Texas – A 55-year-old man who formerly resided in Weslaco has been ordered to prison following his conviction of one count of conspiracy to transport aliens within the United States, announced U.S. Attorney Ryan K. Patrick. Former Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer Sabas Salinas pleaded guilty Nov. 1, 2017.

Today, U.S. District Judge Micaela Alvarez handed Salinas a 24-month sentence to be immediately followed by three years of supervised release. In handing down the sentence, Judge Alvarez noted that Salinas was entrusted with authority from the people - the citizens of the community. She noted that one of his specific job responsibilities was to ensure that individuals who were not authorized to come into the U.S. were prevented from doing so, and he did the exact opposite. Additionally, in spite of his good background, and regardless of whether he was getting paid for his actions, she found his participation in the offense to be corrupt.

Salinas had admitted that while on duty at the Progreso Port of Entry, he was going to allow Juana Sifuentes-Villagomez, 48, a lawful permanent resident of Donna, to transport an illegal alien into the U.S.

On Aug. 14, 2017, Sifuentes-Villagomez arrived at the Progreso Port of Entry with Asiano Uresti-Segundo, 46, of Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Salinas was attempting to conduct the initial inspection and planned to allow them entry in to the U.S., knowing Uresti-Segundo was an illegal alien and not permitted to do so. However, other CBP officers discovered Uresti-Segundo was a citizen of Mexico who had been previously deported and did not have permission to re-enter the country. Both Sifuentes-Villagomez and Uresti-Segundo were arrested that day.

The investigation led to the discovery that Uresti-Segundo was going to pay Sifuentes-Villagomez for smuggling him illegally into the U.S. through a port of entry and transporting him to Donna.

Salinas was later arrested for his part in the conspiracy on Sept. 14, 2017.

Salinas has been and will remain in federal custody pending transfer to a U.S. Bureau of Prisons facility to be determined in the near future.

Sifuentes-Villagomez pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to transport aliens within the United States and is scheduled to be sentenced on Feb. 28, 2018. Uresti-Segundo entered a guilty plea to unlawfully attempting to enter the U.S. after being previously removed and is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 11, 2018. They also remain in custody pending those hearings.

The Department of Homeland Security – Office of Inspector General conducted the investigation with the assistance of Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations and CBP – Office of Field Operations. Assistant U.S. Attorney Linda Requénez prosecuted the case.

Topic(s):

Human Smuggling

Public Corruption

Component(s):

USAO - Texas, Southern

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