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District of Arizona

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, August 15, 2022

Alien Smuggling Coordinator Pleads Guilty to Bribing Former Border Patrol Agent

TUCSON, Ariz. – Luis Alfredo Quintero-Gonzalez, 36, of Mexico, pleaded guilty on August 11, 2022, for Conspiracy to Commit Bribery and Alien Smuggling. Sentencing is scheduled for October 25, 2022, before United States District Judge Jennifer G. Zippis.

Evidence gathered during the investigation established that Quintero-Gonzalez paid former United States Border Patrol (USBP) agent Carlos Passapera thousands of dollars in cash bribes for smuggling undocumented noncitizens into the United States between August and December 2019.

Quintero-Gonzalez admitted that he conspired to coordinate and coordinated the illegal entry of undocumented noncitizens by acting as the middleman between Passapera and the individuals seeking illegal passage into the United States. While working as a USBP agent, Passapera would receive communication from Quintero-Gonzalez and then pick up the undocumented noncitizens along the U.S.-Mexico border near Lukeville, Arizona. Passapera would then smuggle the individuals through Border Patrol checkpoints and deliver them to locations within the Phoenix area. Throughout the conspiracy, Quintero-Gonzalez and Passapera smuggled at least eight undocumented noncitizens into the United States. In exchange for his role in the conspiracy, Passapera received approximately \$64,000 in bribery payments from Quintero-Gonzalez.

A conviction for Conspiracy to Commit Bribery and Alien Smuggling carries a maximum penalty of five years of imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

Passapera was charged separately for his involvement in the conspiracy in case CR-20-01706-TUC-JGZ-MSA and has pleaded not guilty. His jury trial is scheduled to begin on April 3, 2023, before United States District Judge Jennifer G. Zippis.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Southern Arizona Corruption Task Force, and the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General. The Financial Crimes and Public Corruption Section of the United States Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, Tucson, handled the prosecution.

CASE NUMBER: CR-21-01529-TUC-JGZ-MSA
RELEASE NUMBER: 2022-135_QUINTERO-GONZALEZ

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Topic(s):

Public Corruption
Immigration
Human Smuggling

Component(s):

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
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