


## FMCSA imposes lifetime ban for felony human trafficking offenses

### Smuggling ring targets unsuspecting truckers

FMCSA published a final rule that adds human trafficking to the list of offenses that permanently disqualify individuals from operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV). This final rule mandates that states come into substantial compliance with 49 U.S.C. 31311(a) as soon as practicable, but not later than three years from the effective date of this final rule.

In a related story (below), truckers were targeted and used by a smuggling ring to transport individuals past checkpoints without their knowledge.

 VICTORIA, Texas – Humberto Ramirez-Santos, a Mexican national living in Texas pleaded guilty to his involvement in a conspiracy to transport illegal aliens between 2011-2017. The smuggling ring assisted the illegal entry of individuals into the U.S. from China, Russia, India, Brazil, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico. Ages of those smuggled into the country ranged from toddlers to the elderly but were mostly young adults. Testimony was heard that trips were taken every week and the total number of aliens transported were incalculable.

One notable tactic used by the ring was to target tractor trailers parked in South Texas, remove the seal on the trailer and load the individuals. The trucker would be followed north of checkpoints where the ring would retrieve the people. The drivers were said to be unaware of their human cargo and were exposed to criminal liability. The aliens were then transported in closed Penske trucks to Houston. Sentencing has been set for Oct. 1, 2019. Ramirez-Santos faces up to 10 years in prison and a possible \$250,000 fine.

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