



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Border Patrol Rescues 51 Migrants in Laredo** *Salvadoran, Honduran and Mexican Nationals Sealed in Tractor-Trailer*

WASHINGTON, DC – Fifty-one undocumented aliens locked in a trailer were rescued late Tuesday night when agents from the Laredo North Border Patrol Station discovered them during an inspection at a checkpoint on I-35. The driver, a 39-year-old U.S. citizen who admitted to being paid \$2,000 to drive through the checkpoint, was arrested on federal smuggling charges and is currently in federal custody pending court proceedings.

Agents were inspecting a tractor-trailer at about 11:30 p.m. when a Service canine alerted to the rear doors of the trailer, indicating the possible presence of hidden human cargo. Agents unsealed the doors and discovered the migrants inside. Thirty-four were from Mexico, 16 from El Salvador and one from Honduras. No one was injured.

In interviews with agents, the migrants said they had arranged to be smuggled into the United States and transported to San Antonio by an unidentified smuggler, whom they agreed to pay up to \$1,000 each once they secured employment.

“This is typical of the callous disregard smugglers have for their human cargo,” said INS Commissioner James Ziglar. “This had the potential to be a tremendous tragedy. These individuals are extremely fortunate that Border Patrol agents were able to rescue them before anyone was injured.”

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