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38th DISTRICT ATTORNEY NEWS RELEASE

On March 25, 2026, a criminal trial was held in Uvalde County for Tony Ray Caudle of Alice, Texas. Caudle was previously indicted on February 20, 2024, for the second-degree offense of smuggling of persons with a firearm. This criminal trial stemmed from a traffic stop of the defendant on February 21, 2022, by the City of Uvalde police officers, Greg Villa and Jesus Mendoza. Detective Villa saw Caudle traveling from FM 481 and then onto Main Street in Uvalde and stopped the defendant for the improper use of an auxiliary light on his vehicle. Detective Villa approached Caudle's vehicle whereat he discovered that the defendant had two individuals in the backseat of the vehicle who were trying to avoid detection. Caudle's son-in-law, Anthony Joseph Torres, was also in the vehicle and was found to be in possession of .370 Taurus. The investigation determined that the defendant removed his third row from his SUV, did not know the identity of the rear passengers, changed his story numerous times as to the reason he traveled from Alice to Uvalde, and that the passengers in the backseat were not in the U. S. legally. Ultimately, the investigation determined that the Caudle was transporting the rear passengers with the intent to conceal them from law enforcement. Anthony Torres, who had been previously sentenced to 4 years confinement in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, testified at trial that he always carried a weapon on him and that Caudle and Torres traveled to Uvalde from Alice, Texas, and left sometime in the late evening to travel to Piedras Negras to look at a motor. The investigation revealed that neither Caudle or Torres knew that Piedras Negras was located in Mexico. After hearing the evidence presented, the Uvalde jury found the defendant guilty of the offense of smuggling with a firearm. Christina Mitchell, District Attorney, enhanced the punishment due to Caudle's two previous confinements in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in 1997 for felony theft and in 2003 for felony driving while intoxicated. The Uvalde jury sentenced Caudle to thirty-five (35) years confinement in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. District Attorney, Christina Mitchell, along with Bayleigh Juarez, BPU Assistant District Attorney, and Amy Maldonado, Investigator, prosecuted this case on behalf of the state. This sentence sends a clear message from the Uvalde community that smuggling of persons, and the companion offenses and dangers from smuggling will not be tolerated in our community.



Board Certified Criminal Law



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