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U.S. Customs and
Border Protection

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CBP Statement Regarding The Death Of A Guatemalan Citizen

Release Date: March 11, 2020

EL PASO, Texas – U.S. Customs and Border Protection is saddened to report a 19-year-old, 8-month pregnant woman from Guatemala was pronounced deceased Tuesday afternoon in an El Paso, Texas hospital. Our condolences are with her family.

On Saturday, March 7, at 7 p.m. MDT, a 19-year-old Guatemalan national was encountered by El Paso Sector Border Patrol agents, east of El Paso in Clint, Texas. A male companion with the woman indicated she fell from the steel mesh border barrier, landing on her back. Agents immediately contacted Emergency Medical Services, which transported her to a local hospital where she underwent emergency medical intervention including an emergency C-section. Despite the best efforts of medical personnel, her unborn child did not survive. After multiple surgeries to address her injuries, she was pronounced deceased by medical personnel at 2:39 p.m. MDT on Tuesday, March 10.

“Despite the best efforts of our Border Patrol agents and medical professionals, sadly more lives have perished at the hands of human smugglers,” said El Paso Sector Chief Gloria Chavez. “Someone in Mexico guided this 8 month pregnant woman from Guatemala to this section of the border and encouraged her and helped her climb the steel mesh border barrier. We will engage our law enforcement partners in Mexico to find those responsible for placing these lives in danger.”

The care of those in CBP’s custody is paramount. Consistent with policy, CBP’s Office of Professional Responsibility has initiated a review. The Department of Homeland Security’s Office of the Inspector General and the Government of Guatemala have been notified.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between official ports of entry. CBP is charged with securing the borders of the United States while enforcing hundreds of laws and facilitating lawful trade and travel.

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