

OFFICE OF THE  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

**JOYCE E. DUDLEY**  
District Attorney



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RELEASE DATE

*Joyce E. Dudley*  
APPROVED BY JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Lee Carter, Senior Deputy District Attorney

CONTACT PERSON (805) 568-2300

\*\*\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\*\*\*

November 9, 2011

**Re: *Medical Marijuana***

Santa Barbara District Attorney Joyce Dudley announced today that on November 7, 2011, Juan Solis, Sintia Martinez and Jose Lopez, the owners and operators of The Healing Center, a marijuana storefront, were found guilty after a court trial in the Santa Barbara Superior Court.

This case arose out of arrests made in 2010 following an investigation conducted by narcotics detectives from the Santa Barbara Police Department. The detectives investigated the marijuana storefront which was operating in a commercial building located at the intersection of San Andres and Micheltorena Streets. The owners, Mr. Solis and Ms. Martinez, were arrested for marijuana sales activity on February 17, 2010, at which point the business was closed down. The owners reopened the business a short time later. The owners and Mr. Solis were again arrested on June 23, 2010, and a third time on October 26, 2010, each time for selling marijuana and possessing marijuana for sale.

The Honorable Frank J. Ochoa heard the court trial and found the defendants guilty of Possession of Marijuana for Sale for their activities on the various dates of arrest. In its ruling the Court held that it is illegal to sell marijuana and it is illegal for anyone to be compensated for "dispensing" marijuana. The Court stated that there is no valid "medical marijuana" defense to a charge of possessing marijuana for sale. The Court rejected the defendants' claim that their customers were members of their cooperative and held this was not a defense

The defendants all served some jail time and then were placed on felony probation with standard felony drug terms and conditions which included the condition that they will be prohibited from working in any marijuana business.

The ruling made clear that individuals can legally grow, and use, their own medically approved marijuana and that it is legal for individuals to join together to collectively cultivate their marijuana, which they can divide amongst themselves.

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□ SANTA BARBARA OFFICE  
1112 Santa Barbara Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2300  
Fax: (805) 568-2453

□ SANTA MARIA OFFICE  
312-D East Cook Street  
Santa Maria, CA 93454  
(805) 346-7540  
Fax: (805) 346-7588

□ LOMPOC OFFICE  
115 Civic Center Plaza  
Lompoc, CA 93436  
(805) 737-7760  
Fax: (805) 737-7732