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Cisneros pleads guilty to misdemeanor count

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros pleaded guilty yesterday to a misdemeanor count of lying to the FBI, ending a four-year, \$9 million-plus independent counsel investigation that dimmed the luster of a one-time Democratic Party rising star.

The former Clinton Cabinet member must pay a \$10,000 fine but will face no jail time or probation. The court accepted his plea agreement just as his trial on 18 felony counts of conspiracy, obstruction of justice and lying to the FBI was set to begin.



CISNEROS

In exchange, Cisneros admitted in court that he falsely told the FBI, while under consideration for the Cabinet post, that he had never paid his ex-mistress more than \$2,500 monthly. He gave Linda Jones more than \$250,000 between 1989 and 1994, prosecutors said.

"I accept responsibility for the conduct as outlined," Cisneros told U.S. District Judge Stanley Sporkin, his lawyer at his side. His wife, Mary Alice, was not in the courtroom.

Cisneros, a former San Antonio mayor who is now president of the Spanish-language television network Univision in Los Angeles, ducked out of the courthouse without talking to reporters. But in a prepared statement, he said: "I regret my lack of candor ... I hope that all

who follow me in public service learn the lesson that truth and candor are important in the process of selecting our leaders."

In accepting the plea agreement, which Sporkin said he initially thought was too lenient, the judge said: "I know there will be some second-guessing about this plea. There will be some who will say that the sanction is not tough enough and others who will say here is more evidence of the Independent Counsel Act as not serving the public interest."

But, he added, "We cannot permit an individual to lie his way into high public office ... The work of the independent counsel in this case reaffirms the importance of telling the truth."

Labor Day death toll reaches 78

AUSTIN (AP) — The people were killed in traffic crashes during the 78-hour Labor Day week, Texas Department of Transportation reported yesterday.

According to preliminary reports, the 34 fatal accidents included 13 one-vehicle, two-vehicle collisions, two deaths involving more than two four auto-pedestrian and one auto-bicycle accident.

There were four fatalities on Friday, 10 on Saturday, 11 on Sunday and 10 on Monday. Three percent of the fatalities occurred between 7 p.m. and midnight.

In cases where seats were not worn, the DPS said 43 of 27, of those killed were wearing safety belts. Seven were ejected from their vehicles.

Thirty-four percent of the deaths involved people 65 years old or younger.

Only 20 percent of the people killed in traffic crashes were wearing safety belts.

A 2-month-old girl and a 1-year-old girl were among those not properly restrained.

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14-year-old killed in tunnel collapse

GRAND PRAIRIE (AP) — A 14-year-old boy died yesterday after being buried in a pile of sand on a construction site, authorities said.

The boy and a 13-year-old friend were digging tunnels in the wet sand pile when one of the "tunnels" collapsed, completely burying and suffocating the older boy.

The 13-year-old boy, who was standing up, was buried up to his neck when police officers arrived, said

John Brimmer, a police detective.

Officers began digging with their bare hands to free the boys, said Brimmer.

The 14-year-old boy, John Reynolds, was not breathing when officers finally reached him.

Reynolds was airlifted to Methodist Hospital in Dallas, where he died early Tuesday.

The second victim was airlifted to Parkland Health & Hospital System, where he was treated and later released.

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