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## Woman charged with transporting illegal immigrants

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NORTH CHARLESTON, SC (WCSC) - A Michigan woman arrested for transporting a van full of illegal immigrants through the Lowcountry faces a judge. The charges against her stem from a new law in our state.

Thirty-four year-old Melissa Segura is accused of traveling with a van full of half a dozen illegal immigrants inside. A judge tells her she'll stay behind bars with a \$25,000 bond.

"I've been with Hispanics my whole life, I didn't know it was illegal," Segura said. "Of course it's not illegal. That's not what you're charged with," the judge responded.

Mount Pleasant Police pulled over a minivan with Segura and six others inside, for a traffic violation on the Arthur Ravenel Bridge.

Police say the van was traveling toward Charleston on the bridge, but when the blue lights came on, the driver kept going, and passing several safe places to stop. Eventually the van pulled over a couple miles down the road, near the Spruill Avenue exit on I-26.

Officers then found out the driver didn't have a driver's license and five other passengers in the backseat couldn't verify their status in the states. Police also say Segura had a ledger of 15 names with dollar figures and gas expenses beside each person.

"We interviewed people in the van they were only able to produce Mexican identification. This gave us enough reason to believe they may be in the country illegally, and we notified Immigration, Customs, and Enforcement, or ICE," police spokesman Sgt. Steve Meadows said.

Segura, who is originally from Michigan, told authorities the passengers were her friends, and she was taking them from Myrtle Beach to North Charleston.

Now she's facing a \$5,000 fine and possibly five years in prison.

Mount Pleasant is the first agency in the state to make an arrest under the state law of furthering illegal entry or avoidance of detection. The law has been in effect about a year, and the Charleston County Solicitor's office will prosecute.

Her passengers, one of which was a teenager, are being held at the Charleston County Detention Center. Police say they will be deported back to Mexico.

*Posted by [Logan Smith](#)*

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