

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - February 19, 2004

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***Mega Millions*™ \$215 Million Jackpot Highest In Nation; Lubbock Man Claims \$700,000 Prize**



On Wednesday, Jose Soto became the first \$700,000 Texas Lottery Mega Millions winner in Lubbock.

(Austin, February 19) - As the *Mega Millions*™ jackpot climbed to heights never seen on a Texas Lottery® billboard, \$215 million, one *Mega Millions* winner from Tuesday night's drawing wasted no time in collecting his megapplied prize of \$700,000.

Lubbock resident José Soto and his wife purchased one Quick Pick ticket and one with self-selected numbers at the Town & Country #147, 3204 Avenue Q in Lubbock.

"My wife said she had a feeling about *Mega Millions* on Tuesday night, so we bought two tickets," he said. "She also insisted I buy the Megaplier. I've bought other *Mega Millions* tickets, but this is the first time she's decided we needed to buy a *Mega Millions* ticket, so this is pretty good for a first time."

"When Mrs. Soto decided it was time to buy a ticket because she had a feeling, she knew what she was talking about," said Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Reagan E. Greer. "Considering \$177 million was up for grabs, the Sotos did alright when they decided to megaply their purchase, and as a result, took home more than half a million."

Soto and his wife saw the winning numbers on a local Lubbock TV station last night.

"When we got here (Lubbock Claim Center), we were in shock, and we still are a little bit," he said. "We don't know what we're going to do exactly, except pay off medical bills. My wife has had some serious problems and we've got lots of bills as a result, so I'll be glad to pay those off."

His wife plans to buy her mother a stove and help her high-school-age daughter prepare for college where she plans to study to be a pediatric nurse.

Even though they won \$700,000 before taxes, the Sotos said they plan to buy tickets for Friday's \$215 *Mega Millions* drawing, currently the highest in the country.

"This is a history-making jackpot for the Texas Lottery," Greer said. "Now only are we in the stratosphere of jackpots, but *Mega Millions* is the top prize in the nation right now. We expect sales will continue to climb through Friday, when we'll see the largest portion of sales for this draw. And, as always, we encourage our players to play responsibly. It only takes one ticket to win."

For more information about the Texas Lottery, please visit the official Texas Lottery Commission Web site at www.txlottery.org. For more information on Mega Millions, visit www.megamillions.com.