



MEDIA RELEASE

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The following is a press release from the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland.

TWELVE INDIVIDUALS INDICTED IN SOUTHERN MARYLAND COCAINE CONSPIRACY

Total of 45 Southern Maryland Drug Defendants Charged in Federal Court Since 2006

Greenbelt, Maryland - A federal grand jury indicted twelve individuals in a conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine and 50 grams or more of crack cocaine between November 2006 and September 2009, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. The indictment was returned on September 2, 2009 and unsealed on September 10, 2009, upon the arrests of the defendants.

"This indictment is the result of a sustained effort by local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to pursue southern Maryland drug dealers who qualify for federal prosecution, an initiative that has yielded federal indictments of 45 defendants in the region since 2006," said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein. "Our goal is to prosecute drug dealers, send them away to serve lengthy terms in federal prisons far from home and seize any cash, vehicles, jewelry and other property purchased with criminal profits."

"The arrest of these individuals last week reflects the cooperative efforts between DEA and our state and local counterparts. Due to the diligent work of all involved, this cocaine trafficking network has been dismantled and it will no longer be able to poison our communities. Additionally, by hitting drug trafficking organizations where it hurts them most and seizing drug proceeds, in this case over \$1.5 million in cash and property, we are crippling its ability to ever return," stated Ava Cooper Davis, Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent in Charge.

"These indictments are a result of pro-active investigative partnerships between federal and local authorities who are committed to making communities safer by identifying, arresting, and prosecuting individuals involved in the sale of drugs. I congratulate and thank the investigative personnel and the United States Attorney's Office for their excellent work," said St. Mary's County Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron.

"I'm proud of the work put into this investigation. Certainly the arrests demonstrate that when law enforcement agencies join forces, the ability to identify and shut down criminal enterprises is expedited and criminals are quickly removed from our communities," said Charles County Sheriff Rex Coffey.

Charged in the one count indictment are:

Rodney Matthew Estep, a/k/a "Barney Fife," age 33, of Mechanicsville, Maryland;

Shawne Theodore Whittington, age 29, of Waldorf, Maryland;

Darrell Alphonso Carter, age 42, of Abell, Maryland;

Anthony Levi Taylor, a/k/a "Tony Taylor," age 41, of Lusby, Maryland;

Anthony Maurice Thomas, a/k/a "Mo Somerville," age 49, of Waldorf, Maryland;

Glenn Edwin Buckler, Jr., a/k/a "Glenny," age 34, of Mechanicsville;

Jonathan Latif Chase, a/k/a "Latee Chase," age 35, of California, Maryland;

Nathaniel Christopher Ford, a/k/a "Chris Ford," age 39 of Waldorf;

Donald Antonio Townsend, a/k/a "Piggus" and "Squeak," age 31, of Bushwood, Maryland;

James Walter Ball, Jr., a/k/a "Pooh Ball," age 34, of Great Mills, Maryland;

Travis Jamar Mills, age 21, of Hollywood, Maryland; and

Christopher Tyrone Brown, age 39, of Capitol Heights, Maryland.

The indictment also seeks forfeiture of \$1.5 million, alleged to be the proceeds of the conspiracy. Twenty search warrants were executed on September 10th throughout Southern Maryland, seizing cash, drugs, luxury automobiles, custom motorcycles, jewelry - including several rolex watches, and real estate.

If convicted, the defendants face a minimum mandatory sentence of ten years in prison and a maximum sentence of life in prison. Defendants Estep, Taylore, Chase, Ford, Ball, Mills and Brown are detained pending trial. Whittington, Carter, Thomas and Townsend have been released under the supervision of U.S. Pretrial Services on 24 hour lockdown with electronic monitoring. Glenn Buckler is scheduled to have his detention hearing later today. No trial date has been set.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked the Drug Enforcement Administration, St. Mary's County Sheriff Tim Cameron, Calvert County Sheriff Mike Evans, Charles County Sheriff Rex Coffey, Chief Roberto L. Hylton of the Prince George's County Police Department and their deputies and officers, for their investigative work in this Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force case. Mr. Rosenstein commended Assistant United States Attorneys James A. Crowell IV and Mara B. Zusman, who are prosecuting the case.