



Department of Justice

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OPELIKA FELON SENT TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR 9 YEARS FOR GUN POSSESSION

Montgomery, Alabama — Curtis Lamar Ross, age 39, of Opelika, Alabama, was sentenced in federal district court in Montgomery to 9 years in federal prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm, U.S. Attorney Leura G. Canary announced today.

Ross pled guilty to possessing a Taurus, 9 mm pistol in Auburn on July 25, 2004. Ross was found in possession of the firearm after a traffic stop of his vehicle by Auburn Police Department officers. In addition to the gun, Ross was also in possession of cocaine and marijuana. Ross' criminal history includes four prior felony convictions for Theft of Property, Possession of a Controlled Substance on two occasions, and Promoting Prison Contraband. Because of his prior felony convictions, Ross was prohibited under federal law from possessing a firearm.

In addition to the prison sentence, Ross was also sentenced to serve three years of supervised release under the supervision of a federal probation officer after his release from prison.

The case was investigated as part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods and the Middle District of Alabama's Alabama ICE (Isolating the Criminal Element) programs, aimed at preventing violent crime and the illegal possession of firearms. According to United States Attorney Leura G. Canary, "Curtis Ross is a repeat offender who

continued to possess a gun and drugs. This sentence sends a strong statement that repeat offenders who break the law and possess guns will not be tolerated in our communities.”

This case was investigated through the joint efforts of the Auburn Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”). The case was prosecuted by Assistant U. S. Attorney Matthew Shepherd.