



Department of Justice

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RICHMOND CRACK COCAINE DEALER SENTENCED TO LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS - Billy L. Hicks Jr., 37, Richmond, Indiana, was sentenced to life without parole late Friday by U.S. District Judge William T. Lawrence. On July 15, 2009, Hicks was found guilty as charged of distributing more than 50 grams of cocaine base, commonly known as "crack" cocaine. The case against Hicks was the result of an investigation by Drug Enforcement Administration and the Wayne County Drug Task Force.

Hicks was initially charged in Wayne County for distributing cocaine to Tony Hurd on July 18, 2006. Tony Hurd was working as a confidential informant for law enforcement and agreed to conduct controlled buys of "crack" cocaine from various drug dealers in Richmond, Indiana under the supervision of law enforcement. One such drug deal occurred from Billy Hicks on July 18, 2006. On July 17, 2007, Hicks was arrested and charged in Wayne County for dealing "crack" cocaine to Tony Hurd. While Hicks was awaiting trial on the Wayne County charges, Tony Hurd was murdered. The homicide occurred in Englewood, Ohio, on August 2, 2007, and was the result of a drive-by shooting. After Hurd was murdered, Wayne County dismissed charges against Hicks.

On March 19, 2008, a grand jury sitting in Indianapolis indicted Hicks for distributing more than 50 grams of "crack" cocaine to Tony Hurd on July 18, 2006. In July 2009, after a three-day jury trial, Hicks was found guilty as charged. The investigation of the murder of Tony Hurd is ongoing.

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Matthias D. Onderak, who prosecuted the case for the government, the life sentence imposed was mandatory because Hicks previously was convicted of three felony drug crimes.

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