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Methamphetamine Dealer Sentenced to 20 years for Dealing "Ice"

(Norfolk, VA) – Joe Floyd Long, age 36, of Suffolk, Virginia, was sentenced today to 20 years in federal prison for his part in a conspiracy to distribute a pure form of methamphetamine, known as "ice." Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, made the announcement after Long was sentenced by United States District Court Judge Rebecca Beach Smith. Long previously pled guilty to these charges on October 17, 2006.

According to court documents, Long was one of dozens of local distributors of the highly addictive drug, which is manufactured in methamphetamine "super labs" in Mexico and smuggled into the United States. In this case, the drugs were then shipped to the Eastern District of Virginia from suppliers in California, and money was wired back.

Long is the 29th person to be sentenced as the result of an investigation dubbed "Ice Storm." The operation resulted in the seizure of approximately \$900,000, 20 guns, and 14 pounds of "ice," some of which was 100% pure. The organization laundered more than \$1.4 million in drug proceeds.

Last week, two of the group's sources of supply, Octavio Chavez, 33, and Esmerelda Ramirez, 31, were arrested in California. They were ordered held without bond and removed to Norfolk to face methamphetamine distribution charges. Chavez and Esmerelda were indicted by a Federal Grand Jury on December 13, 2006 along with three local residents: Fernando Santana, age 27; John D. Gossett, age 32,; and Robert Aycock, age 23, all of Virginia Beach, Virginia. All are facing mandatory minimum sentences of ten years in prison.

The Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service, and the Chesapeake, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach Police Departments investigated this case. Assistant United States Attorney Laura M. Everhart is prosecuting the case for the United States.

Defendants are presumed to be innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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