



## U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Arkansas*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 2, 2006**

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### **SECOND ARMED ROBBER PLEADS GUILTY IN PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS CASE**

**Little Rock** - Bud Cummins, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, announced that the Cecil Ray Aldridge, age 25, entered a plea of guilty Wednesday, March 1, 2006, for his role in a conspiracy to commit the armed robbery of the East Central Arkansas Insurance, Incorporated, an independent insurance agency located in Forrest City, Arkansas on April 26, 2005. Aldridge also pled guilty to Conspiracy to Brandish Firearms during a Crime of Violence, and to being a Felon in Possession of Firearms before United States District Judge James M. Moody, Jr. today.

According to the Indictment and proceedings in this case, on April 26, 2005, Aldridge and Dewayne Hamilton robbed the employees of East Central Arkansas Insurance, Inc. by threat of force and violence while armed with firearms. The firearms utilized in this robbery were a 9 millimeter pistol and a .25 caliber pistol. Aldridge and Hamilton were located by Forrest City Police Department Officers hiding in a nearby residence shortly after the robbery. Currency and property belonging to the Insurance Agency, as well as personal belongings of the victims were recovered from the residence.

The statutory penalty for Conspiracy and Attempted Interference with Commerce by Threats or Violence is not more than 20 years imprisonment and/or a fine of not more than \$250,000; Conspiracy to Brandish Firearms during Crimes of Violence carries a mandatory seven year term of imprisonment consecutive to any other term of imprisonment imposed; Felon in Possession of Firearms is not more than 10 years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$ 250,000. Aldridge will be sentenced by District Judge Moody at a later date.

Aldridge, a convicted felon, has previously been convicted of Sexual Assault in 2002, First Degree Criminal Mischief in 1999 and two counts of Residential Burglary in 1998, all in Arkansas state court proceedings.

Dewayne Hamilton, the co-defendant, pled guilty February 22, 2006 on similar charges.

This matter is designated as a Project Safe Neighborhoods case. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a federal initiative aimed at reducing gun crime by networking local prosecutors and law enforcement with federal counterparts. Those prosecuted under federal statutes serve longer sentences partly due to the fact that there is no parole in the federal system.

The indictment is the result of an investigation conducted jointly by the Forrest City Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in Little Rock, Arkansas.

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