



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

06/02/08

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ATLANTA POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED FOR TAKING “EXTRA JOB” PAYMENTS TO PERFORM OFFICIAL DUTIES

Atlanta, GA - DANIEL BETTS, 26, of Rockmart, Georgia, was sentenced today on a charge of taking payoffs for “extra jobs” that really involved the performance of his normal duties as a police officer while on duty.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, “Our investigation of Atlanta police misconduct has shown that the vast majority of police officers serve and protect their communities bravely and honorably. Betts, however, betrayed the community’s trust when he solicited payments from some residents to provide the on-duty police protection every citizen equally deserves. This betrayal was compounded by the fact that the victims in this case live and work in high-crime areas and were regularly in need of police protection. This case should send a message to any other police officers who consider engaging in similar corrupt schemes: You are risking federal prosecution, a felony conviction, and the loss of your law enforcement career forever.”

FBI Special Agent in Charge Greg Jones said, “The reputation and integrity of law enforcement impacts everyone who works within the criminal justice community. The FBI continues to put such investigations as this at the forefront and understands the negative impact that police misconduct can have on not only the criminal justice system but on the community at large.”

BETTS was sentenced by United States District Judge Julie Carnes to 3 years probation with 6 months home confinement, 100 hours of community service, \$1200 in restitution, and a \$2,000 fine. BETTS was convicted of these charges on January 24, 2008.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and the information presented in court: In June 2007, as part of the continuing investigation of police misconduct that was triggered by the shooting of Kathryn Johnston in November 2006, the Federal Bureau of Investigation learned that an office worker at an Atlanta apartment complex had an arrangement by which he/she paid APD Officer Gregg Junnier several hundred dollars a week in exchange for standard police protection. Junnier had been charged and pleaded

guilty to federal civil-rights homicide and related state charges based on his involvement in the Johnston shooting. Through Junnier's cooperation with the government, the FBI learned that he and other officers had entered into such arrangements with multiple businesses in Atlanta, whereby the business owners made weekly payments to Junnier and other officers to get them to respond while on duty to emergency calls and provide other services that citizens are entitled to expect free of charge. Many of these businesses were located in areas plagued by high crime rates and illegal drug activity -- areas where residents are desperate for police protection.

After Junnier was suspended from APD, other officers took over the so-called "extra jobs" he had developed with the various business owners. The FBI placed one such business, an apartment complex, under surveillance for several months, from July through October 2007. In that period, BETTS, a five-year veteran of APD assigned to a different area of Zone 1, made weekly visits to the owner to collect a fee of \$120 in cash. Over the course of these monitored meetings, BETTS made clear to the owner that the payments were for the service of having BETTS and other officers patrol the apartment complex and surrounding area while on duty. BETTS also stated that he and other officers would push crime away from the paying owner's apartment complex and towards a nearby complex whose owner was not making payoffs to officers.

On one particular occasion, October 26, 2007, BETTS patrolled through and around the apartment complex while a grant representative was visiting the owner's property. BETTS met with the grant representative and discussed the steps that he and other officers were taking to minimize crime in and around the complex. This assurance was given by BETTS in an effort to help the owner secure the grant for which he had applied. For this service, provided while BETTS was on duty, the owner paid BETTS an additional \$80 on top of his weekly \$120 fee. The grant representative was in fact an undercover FBI agent and the meeting was recorded.

BETTS pleaded guilty to a Criminal Information charging one count of interfering with interstate commerce by means of extortion under color of official right on January 24, 2008.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys Kurt Erskine and Jon-Peter Kelly prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.