



U. S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois

Patrick J. Fitzgerald
United States Attorney

Federal Building
219 South Dearborn Street, Fifth Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-5300

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 10, 2011
www.justice.gov/uaso/iln

PRESS CONTACTS:
AUSA Jessica Romero 312-353-4137
AUSA Michael J. Chmelar 312-886-7655
Randall Samborn 312-353-5318

AURORA MAN SENTENCED TO 40 YEARS IN PRISON FOR 2009 SHOOTING SPREE WHILE ILLEGALLY POSSESSING A FIREARM

CHICAGO — An Aurora man who went on a shooting spree in late 2009, threatening the lives of rival gang members and innocent bystanders alike while firing his gun indiscriminately on residential streets, at family homes and at moving vehicles, was sentenced today to 40 years in federal prison. The defendant, **Michael Taylor**, 31, whose last address was in the 1700 block of Molitor Road in Aurora, was sentenced after he was convicted at trial in June of this year of illegally possessing a firearm while having a previous felony conviction.

U.S. District Judge Samuel Der-Yeghiayan imposed the sentence in Federal Court in Chicago. Taylor was sentenced as an armed career criminal with an extensive record of convictions for violent felonies, many involving the use of a firearm, over approximately a decade. He faced a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years and a maximum of life in prison.

The sentence was announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. “It is a miracle that nobody was hurt in these shootings,” he said.

According to court documents, Taylor’s shooting spree began on Nov. 28, 2009, when he brandished and fired a 9millimeter semi-automatic pistol during a fight that broke out at a party he

was attending at a house near Highland Avenue and Galena Boulevard in Aurora. Later that night, Taylor drove with others, including an individual who was allegedly threatened at the party by rival gang members, to an apartment complex near Ashland Avenue in search of rival gang members and he fired the firearm again at the direction of the apartments. Later still, Taylor drove to houses on Farnsworth Avenue and Jericho Circle and fired at homes he believed to be the residences of rival gang members.

On Dec. 1, 2009, Taylor again went looking for rival gang members after he believed they had fired shots at a relative's house. While driving near Ohio Street and North Avenue, Taylor fired shots in the direction of another vehicle he believed was occupied by rival gang members. A woman walking her dog when the shooting began had to take cover and several homes were damaged by bullet holes. Taylor drove to his relative's house on Union Street and was outside when police arrived; he ran and tossed the weapon before he was arrested. Two other guns were also recovered at the time.

At the trial, an eyewitness testified about the shootings and a forensic expert testified about the presence of gun shot residue on Taylor's hand. Another forensic expert testified about shell casings that were fired from Taylor's gun and later recovered at the scene of three of the shootings.

The case was investigated by the Aurora Police Department and the Chicago Office of the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives (ATF) as part of the Justice Department's Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) program. The Kane County State's Attorney's Office, which initially brought charges, later referred the case to the U.S. Attorney's Office for federal prosecution.

The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jessica Romero and Michael J. Chmelar.

###