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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, February 16, 2011
WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/MN

Federal jury finds Minneapolis man guilty of being a career criminal in possession of a firearm

Yesterday in federal court in St. Paul, a federal jury found a career criminal guilty of possessing a 12-gauge shotgun on February 24, 2010. After just an hour of deliberation, the jury convicted Jeff Parker, age 38, of Minneapolis, with one count of being a career criminal in possession of a firearm. Parker was indicted on October 18, 2010.

Trial evidence proved that on February 24, 2010, Parker possessed the weapon. Because he is a convicted felon, Parker is prohibited from possessing a firearm at any time. Parker's past convictions include third-degree assault in 1997, fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle in 1998, first-degree burglary and third-degree assault in 2001, and second-degree attempted sale of a controlled substance in 2007. All of those cases were prosecuted through Hennepin County. In addition, he was convicted of armed robbery in Illinois in 1991.

Since at least three of Parker's past felony convictions were for crimes of violence or serious drug offenses, he was prosecuted in federal court as a career criminal. Accordingly, he is subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in federal prison. United States District Court Judge Donovan W. Frank will determine Parker's sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled.

This case was charged federally through Project Exile Minneapolis. That law enforcement initiative was launched on July 22, 2010, as part of a city-wide effort to reduce gun violence. Through Project Exile, the Minneapolis Police Department and the ATF work together to apprehend serial criminals for violations of gun laws. Then, the Hennepin County Attorney's Office teams up with the U.S. Attorney's Office to determine where those offenders will most effectively be prosecuted – state or federal court. Those determinations are based on the offenders' criminal histories and current charges, among other factors. To date, the U.S. Attorney's Office has brought charges against more than a dozen serious habitual criminals

through Project Exile Minneapolis.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, the Hennepin County Probation Office, and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives–Violent Crime Impact Team. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew R. Winter.

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