



## U.S. Department of Justice

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### **UPDATES ON OPERATION PRESSURE POINT AND PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS**

PHILADELPHIA - United States Attorney Laurie Magid announced today that in the month of April, 2009, a total of 44 defendants were charged with committing the following federal violations: armed robberies of commercial establishments, narcotics trafficking, possession of firearms in relation to violent crimes and drug trafficking crimes, and possession of firearms by convicted felons. A list of the defendants charged, the crimes charged, and the maximum and mandatory minimum sentence each defendant faces is attached. Two of the cases listed are a direct result of the cooperative federal and city initiative "Operation Pressure Point," launched on April 10, 2009. Each of the 44 defendants listed on the attached chart, charged with federal crimes, faces sentencing ranges up to, and including, life imprisonment.

#### **Project Safe Neighborhoods**

Since 2002, as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), the Philadelphia Police Department and the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office have worked closely with federal law enforcement, including the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to identify the most dangerous criminals and criminal organizations for federal prosecution where the defendant is likely to receive a substantial sentence upon conviction. Under PSN, the Police Department, ATF, DEA, FBI, ICE, and the U.S. Marshals Service have jointly investigated defendants who have committed federal firearms violations, armed robbery, and narcotics offenses. As a result, since 2002, more than 2,200 defendants in Philadelphia have been charged with firearms, narcotics, robbery, and other offenses. More than 95% of these defendants were convicted and sentenced to prison terms exceeding nine years, without parole. Most importantly, more than 150 homicides have been solved since 2002, as a result of this outstanding partnership.

In 2003, the FBI and the Police Department enhanced PSN by initiating the Hobbs Act Robbery Task Force. The purpose is to identify and federally prosecute criminals who rob Philadelphia businesses using a gun. More than 300 such criminals have been prosecuted since this initiative began, most receiving prison terms approaching 20 years.

In 2005, PSN was dramatically expanded through the establishment of PSN working groups in each of the six Philadelphia Police Detective Divisions. Each working group, comprised of federal, state, and local law enforcement representatives, meets monthly to identify

the most violent criminals, groups, and gangs, and to identify appropriate cases for federal prosecution.

In April 2009, the Philadelphia Police Department initiated Operation Pressure Point in an effort to further reduce violent crime. Established through PSN, Pressure Point expands on these extraordinarily successful partnerships. It includes 17 local, state, and federal agencies. Pressure Point coordinates planning and intelligence to reduce violence in targeted hot zones within the 12 police districts that experience the most violence between Friday evenings and Sunday mornings. Statistics show that during 2008, 64% of the city's homicides occurred from April 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>. Of these, 50% occurred from 4:00 p.m. on Fridays to 8:00 a.m. on Sundays.

Based on the success of Project Safe Neighborhoods, it is expected that Operation Pressure Point will result in convictions and lengthy sentences for defendants that are charged through this cooperative effort.

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