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PHILADELPHIA MAN CONVICTED OF FOUR ARMED ROBBERIES OF SMALL BUSINESSES
Faces A Mandatory 107 Year Prison Term

PHILADELPHIA - Harold Sidney Brunson, 36, of Philadelphia, was convicted today of four counts of interference with interstate commerce by robbery for his participation in the robberies of four businesses in Northeast Philadelphia between August 2006 and April 2007, announced United States Attorney Zane David Memeger. Brunson committed the armed robberies at the Ashton Pub, Vince's Service Station, Galaxy Pizza, and Bill's Family Pizza, all located in Northeast Philadelphia. He was convicted of the four counts of Hobbs Act robbery and four corresponding counts of using and carrying a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence. He faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 107 years in prison.

During the robberies, Brunson forced employees and customers to the floor at gunpoint, emptied their pockets, and stole the cash receipts of the businesses from the cash registers and boxes. In some instances, Brunson forced his victims into the rear areas of the businesses, and in the case of Bill's Family Pizza, he ordered the employees into the restaurant's walk-in refrigerator, before fleeing.

Sentencing is scheduled for August 18, 2011, before U.S. District Court Judge Michael M. Baylson.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Philadelphia Police Department, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas M. Zaleski.

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