



Department of Justice

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JACKSONVILLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO GUN CHARGES

Jacksonville, FL- United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that Rodwick Dowston (29, Jacksonville) today pleaded guilty to theft of firearms from a licenced dealer and possession of firearms by a convicted felon. Dowston faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison.

According to court documents, Dowston broke into Shooters of Jacksonville, Inc., a firearms retailer, and stole 17 firearms. According to state court records, Dowston broke into Shooters in the early morning hours of June 22, 2008, and led officers on a high speed chase before wrecking his car. Dowston was found hiding in a dumpster. All 17 firearms were recovered.

The Department of Justice authorized the successive prosecution of Dowston, even though he had been acquitted in state court. During today's hearing, Dowston admitted that he was guilty and did break into Shooters. He remains in custody without bail and is expected to be sentenced later this year.

This case was investigated jointly by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Frank Talbot.

It is another case prosecuted as a part of the Department of Justice's "Project Safe Neighborhoods" program - a nationwide, gun-violence reduction strategy led by ATF.

United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill, along with Virginia O'Brien, Special Agent in Charge, ATF, is coordinating the Project Safe Neighborhoods effort here in the Middle District of Florida, in cooperation with federal, state, and local law enforcement officials.