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LAFAYETTE MAN SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT FOR POSSESSION OF A FIREARM BY A CONVICTED FELON

A convicted felon cannot possess a firearm

LAFAYETTE, LA . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that **TYRONE SHELVIN**, age 23, of Lafayette, Louisiana, was sentenced today in United States District Court for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. U. S. District Judge Tucker L. Melancon sentenced SHELVIN to spend 70 months in a federal prison to be followed by a term of three years of supervised release.

On May 13, 2008, officers with the Lafayette Police Department were traveling on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive when they observed what they believed to be a hand-to-hand drug transaction between the defendant, TYRONE SHELVIN, the driver of a Jeep Wrangler, and another subject. As the officers approached the vehicle, the subject on foot fled while SHELVIN attempted to flee in the Jeep Wrangler. During the pursuit by the officers, SHELVIN jumped out of the vehicle while it was still moving and tried to flee on foot. SHELVIN resisted arrest, but was ultimately subdued and arrested. When the officers returned to SHELVIN's Jeep Wrangler, they recovered a loaded sawed-off shotgun, in plain view, between the driver's seat and the passenger's seat. SHELVIN has a previous felony conviction for distribution of imitation drugs. It is unlawful for a convicted felon to possess a firearm.

United States Attorney Donald W. Washington stated: “Project Safe Neighborhoods is a cooperative effort between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors. We’ve learned that with teamwork, we can make a difference in our communities. This office will continue to support investigation efforts and will vigorously prosecute repeat offenders seeking the toughest sentencing available. The decrease in gun crime are exactly the results we are striving for . . . safer streets, neighborhoods, and front porches for all to enjoy.”

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. United States Sentencing Guidelines established by the United States Congress and the United States Sentencing Commission are only used as guidelines by the judge in determining the appropriate sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case is being prosecuted by the United States Attorney’s Office as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide program begun in 2001 and designed to reduce violence in our communities by aggressively using existing federal firearms laws. This case was investigated by the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney J. Collin Sims.

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