

Department of Justice

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NINE CHARGED WITH PARTICIPATING IN LONG RUNNING DRUG ENTERPRISE CONTROLLING TWO EAST SIDE STREETS

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. and Acting Special Agent in Charge of the New York Field Division United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Wilbert L. Plummer announced today that a federal grand jury has returned a 33 count Indictment charging Theresa Anderson, 58, of Buffalo, N.Y., and eight others with participating in a drug enterprise allegedly operating for over ten years. The Indictment further charges that the Anderson drug trafficking organization, comprised of immediate family and close friends of Theresa Anderson, effectively controlled narcotics trafficking on two streets in Buffalo, New York in this time period.

The Indictment accuses Anderson of operating a Continuing Criminal Enterprise, conspiracy, operating a narcotics manufacturing premise, and specific incidents of narcotics trafficking. These charges are punishable by a mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years and a maximum sentence of life in prison and a \$10,000,000 fine. In addition to Anderson, the Indictment charges Steven Butler, 28; Dion Anderson, 31; Melvin Calhoun, 47; Anquensha Hodge, a/k/a Anne Anderson, 25; Wymiko Anderson, a/k/a Red, 37; Toshia Hodge, a/k/a Toshia Anderson, 28; Tajia Anderson, a/k/a Porkchop, 26; and Leo Mellerson 29; all of Buffalo, N.Y., with conspiracy, and drug trafficking. These charges carry a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison and a maximum sentence of life and a \$10,000,000 fine.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Melissa M. Marangola, who is handling the case, stated that according to the Indictment, between 2000 and February 2012, the defendants operated and participated in an illegal drug trafficking organization in the areas of Swinburne and Deshler Streets in the City of Buffalo. The Indictment further alleges that defendant Theresa Anderson was the leader of the organization who obtained and supplied quantities of cocaine to other members of the organization who then sold the cocaine on the two streets.

The Indictment further alleges that Anderson and others purchased multiple properties on Swinburne and Deshler Streets, and threatened and intimidated rival narcotics traffickers, in order to monopolize narcotics sales in the area. Using this criminal scheme, the defendants sold narcotics 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"Today's Indictment carries two powerful messages," said U.S. Attorney Hochul. "First, to those engaged in any form of organized criminal activity – you are being targeted and your days are numbered. Second, to residents in our community – law enforcement is committed to protecting you, your families, and your property. If you see something, say something. Today's case is not only a credit to our law enforcement partners, it is also an example of how the public and police can work together to rid our streets of predators."

DEA Acting Special Agent in Charge Wilbert L. Plummer stated, "DEA's goal is to keep our communities not only here in Buffalo, but nationwide safe from drug abuse and the violence and crime associated with drug trafficking. This law enforcement effort and arrests have taken away nine violent crack cocaine traffickers off the streets of the Buffalo area today." Mr. Plummer would like to thank all the departments and law enforcement organizations who participated in this investigation.

Today's Indictment and arrest operation marks the third major operation against organized criminals and narcotics gangs this year alone. The Indictment is the culmination of an investigation on the part of the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of under the direction of Wilbert L. Plummer, Acting Special Agent in Charge, New York Field Division, the Buffalo Police Department, under the direction of Commissioner Daniel Derenda, and the New York State Police, under the direction of Major Christopher Cummings.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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