

News Release
U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Rhode Island

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Felon draws a 77-month sentence for gun possession

A federal judge today sentenced **Juan Cuthbert**, 22, of Providence, to 77 months in federal prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm. Last New Year's Eve, Providence Police officers saw Cuthbert toss away a handgun as he fled on foot from a car during a traffic stop.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentence, which Chief U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi imposed in U.S. District Court, Providence.

In May, Cuthbert pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. At the plea hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Zechariah Chafee said the government could prove that, on December 31, 2006, Providence officers on patrol stopped a car for a traffic violation. There were four men in the car and officers observed Cuthbert, in the right rear passenger seat, handle an object in the waistband of his pants.

When backup officers arrived, the police told all four men to get out of the car. As Cuthbert got out, he pushed one of the officers and fled on foot. Officers saw him toss away a metal object partially concealed in a white sock. It was a .22 caliber handgun, which one of the officers retrieved. The police caught and arrested Cuthbert.

Cuthbert has prior convictions for drug trafficking and firearms possession.

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Assistant U.S. Attorney Chafee prosecuted Cuthbert as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with Providence Police, ATF, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 800 years in federal prison.

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