



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
District of Maryland



Rod J. Rosenstein
United States Attorney

Vickie E. LeDuc
Public Information Officer

36 South Charles Street
4th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4885
FAX 410-962-3091

Vickie.LeDuc@usdoj.gov

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CONTACT AUSA VICKIE E. LEDUC or
MARCIA MURPHY at (410) 209-4885

**“STOP SNITCHING” CAMERAMAN CONVICTED ON
FEDERAL DRUG AND GUN CHARGES**

*Baltimore Stop Snitching Video “Helped to Produce Unprecedented Law Enforcement
Coordination”*

Baltimore, Maryland - A federal jury convicted Akiba Matthews, age 35, of Baltimore, Maryland, late yesterday of possession with intent to distribute heroin, possession of a firearm during a drug trafficking crime and possession of a gun by a convicted felon, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein.

“The Baltimore ‘Stop Snitching’ DVD helped to produce an unprecedented era of law enforcement coordination that has brought a record-breaking reduction in violent crime,” said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein. “Repeat offenders who carry guns now understand that they face the likelihood of federal criminal prosecution under the Maryland EXILE program. This case demonstrates that the ‘Stop Snitching’ campaign has failed in Baltimore because most citizens do not want drug dealers and violent criminals in their neighborhoods. The ‘stop snitching’ campaign was nothing more than a cynical ploy by drug-dealing thugs to intimidate citizens who want safe neighborhoods.”

"Despite the grim message that the Stop Snitchin DVD hoped to deliver, it instead became a useful tool for our office to convince state legislators to strengthen penalties against witness threats and intimidation," said State's Attorney Patricia C. Jessamy."

According to trial testimony, on November 15, 2007, an anonymous tip from a citizen reported that a man in a white van was selling drugs in the vicinity of South Collins and Frederick Avenues. Baltimore City police officers responded to that location and observed a man, later identified as Matthews, involved in a drug transaction. A search of Matthews' vehicle upon his arrest recovered 58 gel caps of heroin and a loaded .40 S&W caliber handgun. According to trial testimony, Matthews was the cameraman and appeared in portions of the first “Stop Snitching” video.

Matthew faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for distribution of heroin; a mandatory minimum of five years and a maximum of life in prison for possession of a firearm in

furtherance of drug trafficking; and a maximum 10 years in prison for illegal possession of a gun. U.S. District Judge Catherine C. Blake has scheduled sentencing for August 7, 2008 at 9:15 a.m.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked Baltimore City State's Attorney Patricia C. Jessamy and Assistant State's Attorney Shawn Horton, the Baltimore City Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Drug Enforcement Administration for their assistance in the investigation and prosecution. Mr. Rosenstein commended Assistant United States Attorneys Stephanie Gallagher and Jason Weinstein, who are prosecuting the case.