



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- J.B. Van Hollen, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced today that Demetrius E. Ruffin, Chicago, DOB: 09/10/1976, pleaded guilty in United States District Court, to unlawfully possessing a firearm as a convicted felon, on March 12, 2004. United States District Judge John C. Shabaz scheduled sentencing for August 11, 2004, at 1:15 p.m.

Ruffin faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison, unless it is determined that he is an armed career criminal (someone who has three prior convictions for drug distribution or crimes of violence). If he is an armed career criminal, Ruffin will be sentenced to a mandatory minimum fifteen-year term of imprisonment.

On March 12, 2004, Madison Police Department Officer Denise Markham stopped a 1998 Lincoln Navigator driven by Ruffin because of the incorrect registration on the vehicle. Ruffin could not produce any form of identification and he was arrested. When Officer Markham searched the passenger compartment of the Navigator, she saw marijuana. Officer Chris Boyd arrived at the scene with her drug dog Arno and Arno hit on the center console. A search of the console revealed a hidden compartment, where Ruffin had a Smith and Wesson, .40 caliber pistol.

Ruffin told Officer Markham he had carried drugs in the hidden compartment, and that he sold drugs. According to Ruffin, he had purchased the pistol in Chicago for \$150 and that he needed it for protection from rival drug dealers. Ruffin had earlier been convicted of felony drug distribution in Chicago.

The charge against Ruffin was the result of an investigation conducted by the Madison Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant United States Attorney Rita M. Rumbelow.

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