

**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Project Safe Neighborhoods:**

**HAMDEN MAN INDICTED ON FEDERAL GUN, DRUG CHARGES**

Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, today announced that a federal grand jury sitting in New Haven has returned an Indictment charging CRAIG HINES, age 26, of 279 Park Road, Hamden, Connecticut, with being a felon in possession of a firearm, possessing with intent to distribute more than five grams of "crack" cocaine, and possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug offense. The Indictment was returned yesterday, May 3.

According to the Indictment, HINES possessed a .32 caliber semi-automatic handgun between on or about December 24, 2004 and January 15, 2005. The Indictment further charges HINES with having been convicted of various felony offenses in Connecticut Superior Court in 1996 and 1997, including drug sales, larceny, robbery, failure to appear, and conspiracy to commit assault.

U.S. Attorney O'Connor stressed that an indictment is only a charge and not evidence of guilt. The defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it is the Government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

If convicted, HINES faces a sentence of up to life imprisonment for the illegal gun possession; 40 years for the illegal drug possession; and a mandatory five-year consecutive sentence for possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug offense. Any term of imprisonment could be followed by a term of supervised release for a period of three years, and a fine of up to \$250,000 on each count.

This matter was investigated by the New Haven Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney William J. Nardini.

The Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is aimed at reducing gun violence, deterring illegal possession of guns, and improving the safety of residents of Connecticut's cities. Participants in the initiative include community members and organizations as well as federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. More information on the nationwide Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative can be found at [www.psn.gov](http://www.psn.gov) <<http://www.psn.gov>>.

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