



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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**KISSIMMEE MAN SENTENCED TO NINE YEARS IN PRISON
ON FEDERAL MACHINE GUN CHARGES**

Orlando, Florida - U.S. District Judge Gregory A. Presnell today sentenced **GERSON MITCHELL YELLEN**, a 36 year-old resident of Kissimmee, to nine years' imprisonment for three counts of unlawful possession/transfer of a machine gun. In addition to the prison sentence, YELLEN must serve a term of three years' supervised release and pay a special assessment of \$300.

According to the plea agreement, agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) received information in December 2004 that Yellen was manufacturing machineguns at his Kissimmee residence. During an undercover transaction, Yellen sold a modified AK-47 style rifle to an ATF agent. At the meeting, Yellen also discussed with the agent his intention to kill another individual. Yellen ultimately offered to manufacture additional machineguns for the agent as payment if the agent would agree to eliminate the victim. Agents subsequently arrested Yellen and seized a total of three machineguns that he had manufactured.

“ATF is committed to combating firearms violence and we start by stopping the illegal sales of firearms in our communities,” said ATF Special Agent In-Charge Ralph C. Ostrowski. This investigation removed several illegal machineguns from hitting the streets of Orlando and may have prevented a murder.”

The case represents the culmination of a cooperative effort between the United States Attorney’s Office, the Osceola County Sheriff’s Office, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and ATF. This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program “Project Safe Neighborhoods” - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from ATF. United States Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials. The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert E. Bodnar, Jr.