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“When public safety collides with the collection of evidence, we will choose public safety. Federal agents properly and safely resolved an investigative dilemma. How far do we let a criminal scheme develop? How far do we let a surveilled criminal go? The answer is . . ., ‘Not too far.’” U.S. Attorney Sheldon J. Sperling

## NEWS RELEASE

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**MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA** - Sheldon J. Sperling, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, announced today TYLOR HIX, age 21, of Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, was sentenced for Possession of a Machine Gun, in violation of Title 18, U.S.C., Section 922(o).

“HIX was sentenced to 48 months imprisonment, 36 months supervised release, and ordered to pay a Special Assessment of \$100.00,” stated U.S. Attorney Sheldon J. Sperling.

“Charges arose from an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). On March 29, 2007, HIX was in possession of a machine gun,” stated U.S. Attorney Sperling.

“Federal agents properly and safely resolved an investigative dilemma. ‘How far do we let a criminal scheme develop? How far do we let a surveilled criminal go?’ The answer is . . . , ‘Not too far.’”

“Here a talented ATF Special Agent infiltrated a bank robbery conspiracy. The lead suspect sought automatic weaponry. He wanted to rob the Armstrong Bank in Keyes, Oklahoma. The machine gun, an AK-47, was delivered as requested. The agents didn’t let the prohibited weapon out of their sight.”

“We often have to weigh public safety with the need to gather more evidence. If we stop a criminal scheme, the defendant may claim he wasn’t really going through with it. If agents let him continue and something bad happens, the agents will be blamed.”

“We won’t willingly let an innocent person, much less a bank teller, look at the business end of a machine gun. Public safety is far more important than gathering more evidence.”

“ATF Special Agents did an admirable job here to strike an appropriate balance between the need to protect the public and the interest in gathering evidence.”

“The Honorable Ronald A. White, District Judge in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, presided over today’s sentencing. Judge White ordered the defendant remain in custody of the U.S. Marshal to begin serving his sentence.”

“Assistant United States Attorney Ryan M. Roberts very capably represented the government.”

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