



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Western District of Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**RENTON MAN SENTENCED TO EIGHT YEARS IN PRISON FOR POSSESSION OF
STOLEN AMMUNITION**

Repeat Offender Amassed Lengthy Criminal History in Just Five Years

MICHAEL KEY, JR., 23, of Renton, Washington, was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in Seattle to eight years in prison and three years of supervised release for Possession of Stolen Ammunition. KEY, a repeat offender, was found to have a large package of 112 rounds of .22 caliber ammunition in his jacket pocket when he was arrested for shoplifting two bottles of beer at a Top Foods store in Kent, Washington. Due to his lengthy criminal history, KEY was prohibited from possessing either guns or ammunition. At sentencing U.S. District Judge Thomas S. Zilly noted that KEY had made a “mess of his life” and said, “I am really disturbed by what appears to be an escalation in the nature of your criminal convictions and the nature of the offenses.”

According to records filed in the case, KEY was arrested by Kent Police following the shoplifting incident on January 24, 2007. A review of KEY’s criminal history revealed that he had numerous felony offenses over the last five years. In July, 2003, KEY was sentenced to eight months in prison for assault in the second degree for assaulting a man at a transit station. In January 2004, KEY was sentenced to 42 days in jail for theft in the first degree. Three days after that sentence was handed down, KEY was arrested in downtown Seattle for possession of cocaine. Six weeks later he was arrested in Bellevue and charged with robbery in the first degree for pressing what turned out to be a plastic cap gun into a man’s back and demanding money. Five months after the robbery KEY was arrested in Renton driving a stolen car. KEY was sentenced to 12 months in prison on the possession of cocaine and taking a motor vehicle charges. The robbery charge was dismissed when the victim could not be located. Six months after being sentenced to 12 months in prison, KEY was sentenced to 16 months in prison for assault in the third degree with sexual motivation and communicating with a minor for immoral purposes after assaulting a girl in the stairwell of a Renton apartment complex. KEY was required to register as a sex offender. He failed to register as a sex offender, and was arrested yet again for possession of cocaine on December 16, 2006. KEY still faces sentencing for the cocaine possession in King County Superior Court.

In asking for the significant sentence, Special Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Colasurdo noted that KEY had repeatedly been given a break with shorter sentences on his previous convictions, but had gone right back to his criminal ways. “The United States believes

a sentence of 85 months balances the need to protect the community from Mr. Key and need for Mr. Key to remain hopeful about his future. The United States is hopeful that a 85-month sentence will do what his previous sentences have not -- act as a deterrent and motivate Mr. Key to change his behavior," Mr. Colasurdo wrote in his sentencing memo.

KEY was prosecuted as part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods program. Unveiled by President George W. Bush in May 2001, Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), is a comprehensive and strategic approach to gun law enforcement. PSN is a nationwide commitment to reduce gun crime in America by networking both new and existing local programs that target gun crime and then providing them with the resources and tools they need to succeed. Implementation at the local level

- in this case, in King County-- has fostered close partnerships between federal, state and local prosecutors and law enforcement.

This case was investigated by the Kent Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives. The case was prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Colasurdo. Mr. Colasurdo is a Deputy King County Prosecutor, specially designated to prosecute gun cases in federal court.

For additional information please contact Emily Langlie, Public Affairs Officer for the United States Attorney's Office, at (206) 553-4110.