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**FELON RECEIVES 7 YEARS OF HARD TIME FOR POSSESSING A FIREARM**

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.** – Wilbert Lowe, 23, of Albion, was sentenced to 84 months in prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm, U.S. Attorney Charles R. Gross announced today. U.S. District Judge Robert Holmes Bell also ordered Lowe to serve three years of supervision by the Probation Office upon his release from prison. Lowe had pled guilty on June 19, 2008.

On August 15, 2006, Albion police responded to a report of shots fired. Upon arrival on the scene, officers found Lowe wearing a gun holster. Nearby, in the grass, they found a loaded Norinco 9mm pistol with one round in the chamber ready to fire. Lowe was arrested. Later, forensic examiners found Lowe's fingerprints on the gun. Lowe was previously convicted of a felony and was prohibited by state and federal law from possessing any firearms.

U.S. Attorney Gross commended the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) and the Albion Police Department for their work on the case. This prosecution was initiated as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods, a combined federal, state and local initiative focused on obtaining significant federal prison sentences for persons with a history of committing gun-related crimes. This case was prosecuted on behalf of the United States by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael L. Schipper.