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Savannah Man Faces Possible Life Imprisonment
for Conviction of Firearms and Drug Charges

SAVANNAH: Lisa Godbey Wood, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that **ERIC RONDELL GABE, also known as DERRICK MINOR,** was convicted by a federal court jury in U.S. District Court in Savannah of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon (as an armed career criminal), possession of marijuana, and carrying a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking offense, on April 19 following a one-day jury trial. U.S. District Judge B. Avant Edenfield presided.

Wood stated that the armed career criminal statute provides for enhanced sentencing of felons in possession of firearms who have previously been convicted on three or more occasions of crimes of violence or drug trafficking. She also noted that a conviction of carrying a firearm during a drug trafficking offense allows for an additional sentence of at least five years, consecutive to the term of imprisonment that may be imposed for the other convictions.

This case was prosecuted under Project Ceasefire, the United States Attorney's initiative to combat violence by prosecuting federal firearms offenses throughout the Southern District of Georgia. It resulted from an investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and

Explosives in conjunction with the Chatham County Counter-Narcotics Team, after CNT Agents recognized Gabe, who recently had been convicted in another case, in the parking lot of the now-defunct Studio Lodge motel at 5711 Abercorn Street on May 1, 2005. Believing that Gabe still should have been serving his term of imprisonment and that he might be an escapee, agents attempted to ascertain his identity. Gabe attempted to flee but was restrained, and the loaded .38 caliber revolver and marijuana were recovered after the struggle.

Ms. Wood noted that there is no parole in the federal system. Gabe faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years, and a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. A sentencing date will be set following completion of the pre-sentence investigation.

The United States was represented by Assistant United States Attorney Cameron Heaps Ippolito.

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