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**HAGERSTOWN MAN SENTENCED TO 188 MONTHS FOR  
ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF A GUN**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - Antoine Jeffrey Pope, age 39, of Hagerstown, Maryland was sentenced today to 188 months in prison followed by 5 years of supervised release for being a felon in possession of a firearm, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. At the sentencing hearing U.S. District Judge Andre M. Davis ruled that Pope was an armed career criminal based on Pope's previous convictions, including felony drug distribution and assault.

According to the statement of facts presented to the court on March 9, 2006 at his guilty plea, the Hagerstown Police Department dispatched officers on August 31, 2005 to investigate a report of a home invasion on Clarendon Avenue in Hagerstown. En route to that location, a police officer observed a vehicle 5 blocks from the scene of the reported home invasion which was operating as if the driver was unfamiliar with the equipment. The driver also matched a description of the reported intruder. The officer stopped the vehicle, which was driven by Pope and contained a passenger. When asked to exit the vehicle, the passenger, later identified as John Hollis, fled dropping a handgun. An officer grabbed Pope's arms and asked whether there were any weapons in the car. Pope replied that he was sitting on a gun. A search revealed a fully loaded Taurus .38 caliber revolver between Pope's legs.

Hollis, age 24, of Hagerstown is also charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm. He is scheduled to go to trial in August, 2006. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of ten years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the Hagerstown Police Department for their investigative work, and commended Assistant United States Attorney Stephen M. Schenning, who prosecuted the case.