



## Joint Effort Leads to 32 Year Prison Sentence

October 10, 2019

A man prosecuted as part of a joint effort with the ATF that linked a handgun he had while fleeing police to an armed robbery months earlier, was sentenced to 32 years in prison.

“We want to keep violent criminals with firearms off the streets and behind bars – public safety demands nothing less,” Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg said Thursday. “We are grateful for this partnership with the ATF.”

Zechariah Watts, 21, pleaded guilty to aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon and was sentenced October 4 by Judge Mike Wilkinson. Watts also pleaded guilty to evading arrest in a motor vehicle and was sentenced to 10 years.

The sentences will run concurrently.

Watts was arrested in November 2018 after a three-mile chase in which he sped through red lights and at one point, drove against traffic.

Police found a .45 caliber handgun in his center console of the van Watts was driving.

The gun was run through a system operated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. It matched a shell casing recovered at the scene of an August robbery.

The system, the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network, is a network that contains ballistic information and allows authorities to connect the dots between crimes involving firearms.

Watts was prosecuted by Assistant District Katherine Thomas.

“This was one step away from being a capital murder,” Thomas said. “Thankfully the victim survived this ordeal.”

###