



# UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

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**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY CHUCK ROSENBERG**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**"We won't tell you where. We won't tell you when. But we will be back."**

**(Petersburg, Virginia)** - That was the promise made last October to the community and to would-be criminals at the conclusion of Operation IMPACT, an operation targeting buyers and sellers of illegal narcotics in the City of Petersburg. This week, federal, state, and local law enforcement authorities made good on this promise with the announcement of Operation IMPACT 2. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Marla Decker, Deputy Attorney General, Virginia Attorney General's Office; Cassandra Burns, Commonwealth's Attorney, City of Petersburg; John Dixon, Chief, Petersburg Police Department; James Gregorius, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration; and William Dunham, Resident Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), announced the results of Operation IMPACT 2 at a press conference at Petersburg's Union Station.

The original Operation IMPACT took place from August through October 2007, when 54 individuals were indicted on drug charges at the federal and state level. Of those suspects, 53 have since been arrested. Operation IMPACT 2 continues the success of the first Operation IMPACT. Over the summer of 2008, 38 individuals were indicted at the federal and state level. On September 8, 2008, federal, state and local law enforcement teams began a sweep to locate and arrest the suspects. To date, 24 of the 38 had been arrested.

"The agencies involved in this operation have built upon many past successes and continue to demonstrate that law enforcement at all levels, working together, can achieve great good," said U.S. Attorney Chuck Rosenberg. "Our work continues and we renew our pledge to this community to see our work through to the end."

"We could not have done this without help and support from the community," said Petersburg Police Chief John I. Dixon, III. "Members of the community provided important information during the investigation phase of this operation, and that information helped us to help them in cleaning up their neighborhoods."

Virginia Attorney General Bob McDonnell stated: “Less than a year ago, we told the law abiding citizens of Petersburg that we would help remove drugs and guns from your streets. We explained that this would not be easy, nor would it happen over night. The first phase of Operation Impact was just the beginning. The second phase of this initiative is well underway and more than 20 arrests were made from Monday through today. More arrests are yet to come. We promised that we would work together to ‘impact’ Petersburg in a positive way. We are optimistic that the second phase of Operation Impact, witnessed this week, will make clear that we mean business. This strong law enforcement partnership will work with the citizens of Petersburg, who are dedicated to fighting crime in this City, to remove drugs and guns from the streets, and hold those who do not respect the law accountable.”

Petersburg Police teamed up with the Richmond offices of the DEA and the ATF, and the Virginia State Police Central Regional Narcotics Task Force to conduct undercover and enforcement operations leading to the indictments. Other agencies assisting and participating in the arrest operation include the Petersburg Sheriff’s Office, Dinwiddie County Sheriff’s Office, and the Richmond office of the United States Marshals Service. The U.S. Attorney’s Office and the Office of the Virginia Attorney General will prosecute the Federal charges and the Petersburg Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office will prosecute the state charges.

“ATF takes pride in working together with our law enforcement partners to put violent criminals behind bars”, said ATF Special Agent in Charge Edgar A. Domenech. “ATF’s number one priority is fighting violent crime. We want all citizens to feel safe in their homes and communities.”

Together, Operation IMPACT and Operation IMPACT 2 have resulted in the indictment of 92 people on more than 200 felony charges in a one year period.

Criminal indictments are only charges and not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed to be innocent until and unless proven guilty.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.uspci.uscourts.gov>.

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