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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**INDIVIDUAL CHARGED WITH
OPERATING A DRUG HOUSE AND OTHER OFFENSES**

SAVANNAH, GA: Edmund A. Booth, Jr., United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced that the federal grand jury sitting in Savannah has returned an indictment against a Savannah resident, Michael Stevens, charging the commission of drug and firearms offenses at his residence in Savannah, Georgia.

Booth stated that Stevens was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department as part of "Operation Last Straw," a joint initiative aimed at reducing gun violence by targeting illegal firearms trafficking.

Stevens was charged in a ten count indictment with Maintaining Drug-Involved Premises in violation of Title 21 U.S.C. Section 856(a)(1), Distribution of Crack Cocaine in violation of Title 21 U.S.C. Section 841(a)(1), Possession of Firearms and Ammunition by an Unlawful User of Controlled Substances in violation of Title 18 U.S.C. Section 922(g)(3) and Possession of Ammunition by a Convicted Felon in violation of Title 18 U.S.C. Section 922(g)(1). The indictment charges that between July 2006 and May 2008, the defendant operated a crack house at 525 Durant Avenue, possessing firearms and ammunition as a prohibited person

and selling “crack” cocaine in the process. The offenses charged carry a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years imprisonment and a fine of \$500,000.

Booth emphasized that an indictment is only an accusation and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is entitled to a fair trial, during which it will be the government’s burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Booth praised the joint efforts of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, United States Secret Service, Chatham County Counter Narcotics Team and Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department which led to the indictment.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Cameron Heaps Ippolito.

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