



# Department of Justice

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 19, 2007

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## **TUSCALOOSA CONVICTED FELON GETS MAXIMUM SENTENCE IN FEDERAL PRISON**

**BIRMINGHAM, AL** - Douglas Johnson and Ronnie Gee were sentenced on December 18, 2007, in U.S. District Court. Both were charged in June 2007 with federal firearms violations and were a part of Alabama ICE (*isolate the criminal element*) in Tuscaloosa County. Special agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives along with officers from the Tuscaloosa Police Department arrested twelve people last summer in separate and unrelated cases as a part of the round-up.

“This is an outstanding utilization of federal laws by local law enforcement that continues to make a difference in their respective communities. Felons are again forewarned that those who persist in illegally possessing weapons will serve significant jail sentences,” stated U.S. Attorney Alice H. Martin.

Johnson, 30, and Gee, 28, were co-defendants in a case involving an incident in Tuscaloosa County on October 25, 2006. Tuscaloosa Police officers initiated a traffic stop on their vehicle, and the officer observed open containers of beer. The officer then recognized Johnson as having outstanding warrants and placed him under arrest. Incident to the arrest, the vehicle was searched and two handguns were recovered. One a Hipoint 9 mm and one a .38 caliber Smith & Wesson. Witnesses stated that the handguns were hidden in the vehicle by Johnson and Gee.

U.S. District Court Judge L. Scott Coogler sentenced Johnson to 120 months in prison for being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm. Ten years in prison is the maximum statutory sentence of being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm.

Johnson’s significant criminal history in West Alabama is remarkable. According to testimony in federal court, a State Court jury found Johnson guilty of attempted murder,

possession of cocaine and possession of marijuana in May 2007. Johnson pleaded guilty to the gun charge in October, 2007. Yesterday, at the sentencing hearing, Johnson was served with another warrant involving yet another, unrelated murder charge, and upon the attempt to serve him with papers, he spat on the warrant and wadded it up before being placed back in his jail cell.

Gee, also a convicted felon, was sentenced to 37 months in prison. He also pleaded guilty to the gun violation in September 2007.

“Johnson is exactly the violent offender tough federal firearms laws impact. He can now spend his next 10 Christmas’ in prison which makes Tuscaloosa safer,” added U.S. Attorney Martin. Alabama ICE is a part Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods combats gun violence and fosters safer communities nationwide through both law enforcement and prevention strategies.

“We are pleased with the outcome of these cases,” stated Tuscaloosa Police Chief Ken Swindle. “We are gratified that these defendants got stiff sentences in federal court, and that we were able to bring some closure to another murder case in Tuscaloosa. We expect to see a big difference in our violent crime cases working with the agents from ATF and the United States Attorney’s Office,” added Chief Swindle.

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