



**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Terrence Berg  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Michigan**



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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Shawnta Jones et al**

**ONE DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY, ANOTHER RECEIVES 12 YEARS  
IN CAR JACKING AND ROBBERY SPREE**

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Acting United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced today that one Detroit resident was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for charges involving car jacking, possession of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence, robbery of government property, and receipt, disposal of government property, and another defendant pleaded guilty to five more car jackings that were part of the same scheme in federal court today. Mr. Berg was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Andrew Arena, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Shawnta Jones, 28, of Detroit, was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment, and Brandon Taylor, 21, of Detroit, pled guilty to multiple carjackings, before United States District Judge David M. Lawson. Taylor will be sentenced on December 18, 2008.

The investigation arose after a Department of Justice (DOJ) employee was car-jacked on January 4, 2008 after leaving a Chase Bank ATM on Grand River and Fenkell in Detroit. The DOJ employee was followed home from the bank and robbed, by Taylor, of her cash, car, and purse (which contained government property). The investigation of the car jacking of the

federal employee led authorities to evidence linking Taylor to four additional separate car jackings.

Acting United States Attorney Berg said, "Today's sentence says that if you use a gun to jack a car, you are going to prison for a long time. Those who use guns to steal cars from their owners should be made to understand that the punishment for such crimes will be severe."

Information presented to the Court as part of Taylor's guilty plea revealed that the defendants would conduct surveillance on victims at ATMs and other cash oriented businesses. They would follow the victim back to their home where Taylor would accost them at gunpoint and order them to drive him a short distance from their homes. Taylor would then rob them of their property and take their vehicles which he would drop off a short distance away. Ms. Jones and Taylor would communicate by cell phone and Taylor would tell Jones where to pick him up after he abandoned the carjacked vehicle. Jones was sentenced as an aider and abettor on five counts: two counts of car jacking; and one count each of robbery of government property; receipt, disposal of government property; and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence. Taylor pleaded guilty to seven counts, including five car jackings.

After solving the car jacking of the Justice Department employee, the FBI's investigation revealed that the duo had performed approximately six other similar carjackings over a span of two months from December 2007 through January of 2008.

The lengthy nature of the sentence is due to the gun charge conviction which carries mandatory consecutive sentencing. Seven years imprisonment is required upon conviction of the gun charge and Judge Lawson then ordered an additional five years on the remaining charges for a total of 12 years imprisonment.

The case was the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Terrence R. Haugabook.