



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

08/03/06

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**Statement of United States Attorney David E. Nahmias
on U.S. District Court Decision Yesterday Denying Claims
of Selective Prosecution in Operation Meth Merchant Cases**

We were not at all surprised by yesterday's 38-page order by U.S. District Judge Harold L. Murphy, which comprehensively rejected the claims of selective prosecution raised by ACLU lawyers on behalf of a few defendants in Operation Meth Merchant cases. The order supplements the court's previous decision rejecting similar claims made months ago. And it confirms what we have said from the beginning: The United States Attorney's Office prosecutes people based on the evidence and the law, not their race or ethnicity.

We are pleased that the path is now cleared to resolve the remaining Meth Merchant cases. We have addressed each case on its own merits. To date, 30 of the 49 individuals and 14 of the 16 corporate defendants have pleaded guilty. Charges against 11 individuals and one corporation have been dismissed. The remaining cases are pending.

It should be again be noted that several sheriffs and police chiefs in Northwest Georgia have commended the real-world effects of the Meth Merchant prosecutions in deterring retail sales of the chemicals and other products used to make methamphetamine, especially when supplemented by the new Georgia law regulating such sales. These local law enforcement officials reported an immediate, significant decrease in small toxic meth lab seizures, reports corroborated by DEA and GBI meth lab data.

Investigating and prosecuting those responsible in any way for the horrible effects of meth manufacture, distribution, and use in North Georgia's communities remains a top priority for the U.S. Attorney's Office and our local, state, and federal law enforcement partners.