



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Leura G. Canary  
Middle District of Alabama

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## **FEDERAL JURY FINDS ROANOKE MAN GUILTY ON FEDERAL GUN CHARGE**

**MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**— Semmie Theodore Baggin, 49, of Roanoke, Alabama, was found guilty by a federal jury of knowingly possessing a firearm after previously being convicted of a felony, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(1), U.S. Attorney Leura G. Canary announced today. The sole issue in dispute during the trial was whether Baggin, a convicted felon, had knowingly possessed a 12 gauge shotgun that was discovered in the bedroom closet of his residence. After one full day of trial, it took the jury just over an hour to convict Baggin on the single count indictment.

The jury's verdict is the culmination of a case that began on March 22, 2007, the day that Baggin was last arrested for possession of cocaine. During his post-arrest interview with the Roanoke Police Department, Baggin confessed that he had the gun, which was subsequently found inside the residence exactly where he told investigators it would be. Under federal law, Baggin's prior felony convictions – including several felony drug convictions from the mid-1990s – disqualify him from legally possessing a firearm.

Sentencing in the case is scheduled for December 30, 2008. Baggin faces a maximum sentence of ten years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised release, though the nature and number of his prior felony drug convictions could subject him to designation as an Armed Career Criminal and a fifteen-year mandatory minimum prison term.

This case was brought as part of Alabama ICE, the local Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) program. Sponsored by the United States Department of Justice, PSN is nationwide initiative that aims to reduce gun crime in America by networking existing local programs that target gun crime and providing these programs with additional tools necessary to be successful. The Bush Administration has committed over \$1.5 billion to this effort since PSN's inception in 2001. This funding is being used to hire new federal and state prosecutors, support investigators, provide training, distribute gun lock safety kits, deter juvenile gun crime, and develop and promote community outreach efforts, as well as to support other gun violence reduction strategies.

This case was investigated through the joint efforts of the Roanoke Police Department, the Fifth Judicial Circuit Drug Task Force, including narcotics investigators from the Chambers County Sheriff's Department and the Randolph County Sheriff's Office, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The Alabama Board of Pardons & Paroles, Roanoke Office, also contributed to the prosecution of the case. The trial was presided over by the Honorable Myron H. Thompson, United States District Court Judge for the Middle District of Alabama. Assistant United States Attorneys Nathan D. Stump and Matthew W. Shepherd prosecuted the case.