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**CONVICTED MURDERER CONVICTED OF SOLICITATION OF MURDER WHILE
IN PRISON**

Baltimore, Maryland – United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein, announces that today following a four day trial, a federal jury convicted Ralph Manna, age 67, of Smithsburg, Maryland of solicitation to commit a murder for hire.

United States Attorney Rosenstein stated, "Witnesses who cooperate in investigations of violent criminals need to know that the government will protect them. This conviction demonstrates that the FBI, the Maryland State Police and the United States Attorney's Office will devote the time and resources required to protect government witnesses."

According to evidence presented at trial, Manna, who was serving a life sentence for the 1997 murder of Linda DeLauter and the attempted murder of another woman, solicited another inmate to assist him in hiring someone to kill his ex-wife and son. Testimony at trial indicated that on October 17, 2003, Manna met with an undercover officer posing as a "hit man" and provided him with information to carry out a murder for hire. Manna sought retaliation against his ex-wife and son as the result of his divorce settlement and their cooperation in the 1997 criminal case.

Manna faces a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and 3 years of supervised release.

U.S. District Judge William D. Quarles has set Manna's sentencing for November 7, 2005 at 1:00 pm.

U.S. Attorney Rosenstein commended the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Maryland State Police as well as Assistant United States Attorney Deborah Johnston, who prosecuted the case.