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**BALTIMORE MAN SENTENCED TO 17 ½ YEARS
FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein announces that today U.S. District Court Judge William D. Quarles sentenced Carlos Watkins, age 28, of Baltimore to 17 years and 6 months in prison followed by 5 years of supervised release for conspiracy to distribute and possession with intent to distribute controlled substances.

According to the statement of facts presented to the court as part of his guilty plea on June 24, 2005, from February 2004 to 2005, Watkins conspired with others to distribute crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and other controlled substances from various locations, including 276 South Spring Court and 2014 Jefferson Street, Baltimore. Watkins and others used those locations to store, cook, and package drugs. On at least three occasions in 2005, Baltimore City Police undercover officers, with other confidential sources, made controlled purchases of crack cocaine from Watkins totaling over 21 grams. Watkins also sold at least 50 grams of crack cocaine in 2004. On February 10, 2005 police seized marijuana and drug packaging material from Watkins' home. They also seized two firearms: a loaded Smith & Wesson .45 caliber semi-automatic pistol; and a loaded Smith & Wesson .40 caliber semi-automatic pistol.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Baltimore City Police Department for their investigative work and commended Assistant United States Attorney Kwame J. Manley, who prosecuted the case.