

Department of Justice

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AUTHORITIES TARGET **CITY GANG UNDER FEDERAL RICO STATUTE**

ROCHESTER, N.Y. - Acting United States Attorney Kathleen M. Mehlretter, Monroe County District Attorney Michael Green, Rochester City Police Chief David Moore, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearm and Explosives Resident Agent in Charge Rory O'Connor, jointly announce that yesterday agents and RPD officers, assisted by the United States Marshals, agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigations and New State Parole Officers, commenced the search and arrests of 24 Rochester men and women on federal racketeering and narcotics trafficking charges. Several defendants are still being sought. In addition, the agents and officers executed seven (7) search warrants in Monroe County.

Attached to this release is a copy of the Indictment, along with a listing of the individuals charged and arrested, their ages, the charges against each, and the locations searched. Those arrested are currently being processed through the courts. Several of those arrested on federal charges have prior drug convictions and thus face enhanced sentences in federal court upon conviction. Based upon the allegations contained in the indictment, each defendant faces up to lifetime imprisonment under the relevant statutes.

These arrests and searches are the culmination of a nearly year-long joint investigation by ATF and the Special Investigations Section of the Rochester Police Department. The investigation focused on the violent activities, including murder, attempted murder and assault, and the sale of cocaine by persons identifying themselves as "Chain Gang" or "Wolfpack." The gang operates in the area of Chamberlain and Garson Avenues in the city of Rochester.

The prosecution of the gang is highlighted by the fact that the gang will be charged as an enterprise that was involved in racketeering activity, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 1962. This statute is commonly referred to as the RICO statute. Specifically, the Indictment charges 19 gang members with conspiring to use their membership in the Chain Gang to engage in a pattern of racketeering activity that included multiple acts of drug trafficking, murder, attempted murder, and assault with a deadly weapon. During the course of the investigation, it became clear that Chain Gang/Wolfpack was an "association in fact" of individuals who agreed to participate in unlawful activity. Several factors have historically determined whether one is able to become or remain a

member of the Chain Gang/Wolfpack street gang, which include: long term residence within Chain Gang/Wolfpack territory; familial connections; close relationships with current gang members; a demonstrated ability to obtain and/or sell controlled substances for profit; and, a demonstrated willingness to engage in violent behavior to further the gang's drug trafficking activities, protect its reputation and secure its territory from outsiders.

Acting U.S. Attorney Mehlretter stated this investigation and the actions by law enforcement are yet another example of the joint effort of federal, state, and local law enforcement to remove persons involved in narcotics and in the trafficking of illegal firearms in our communities.

The case brought in federal court is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas E. Gregory.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.