



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shana Jones, Special Assistant
Daryl Fields, Public Information Officer
(210) 384-7440

April 23, 2009

SAN ANTONIO MAN SENTENCED FOR THREE "TRUCK JACKING" INCIDENTS

John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney, announced that yesterday evening, in San Antonio, 42-year-old Travis Lee Houston was sentenced to 52 years confinement in federal prison for taking three motor vehicles by force on November 9, 2007.

In January, a jury convicted Houston on one count of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon; three counts of taking a motor vehicle by force; and, two counts each of interference with commerce by robbery and using a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence.

The jury found that on November 7, 2009, Houston, a driver formerly employed by Grocery Supply Company of San Antonio, and on parole, used a firearm to take control of two 18-wheelers and a concrete truck. The first truck jacking took place in San Antonio; with the other two in Austin. Hoping to secure mass quantities of cigarettes, the defendant hijacked a truck near Roosevelt and Interstate 10. After the driver told him that the cargo contained no cigarettes, Houston drove the stolen truck to Austin in search of another company truck loaded with cigarettes. The Austin incident occurred at a convenience store located at Interstate 35 and Slaughter Lane. When the driver of the second truck attempted to escape, Houston fired his pistol into the cab of the truck. Fortunately, no one was injured. The second truck ultimately crashed into a car, severely injuring the passenger. Unable to steal that truck, Houston fled to a construction site nearby. At that location, a driver of a cement truck noticed Houston and offered him assistance. According to the victim, Houston pointed a gun at him and took off in the cement truck. An Austin police officer stopped the stolen cement truck on a frontage road near Interstate 35 and Riverside Drive and arrested the defendant. Officers subsequently recovered the .38 caliber firearm and ski mask the defendant discarded along the frontage road of Interstate 35.

These cases were investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives together with Austin Police Department. Assistant United States Attorneys Bettina Richardson and David Counts prosecuted this case on behalf of the government.

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