



# PRESS RELEASE

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## For Immediate Release

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### **BREVARD COUNTY ARMED ROBBER FACING 57-YEAR MINIMUM MANDATORY SENTENCE**

ORLANDO - A jury in U.S. District Court in Orlando today found a Palm Bay man, **YOSVANY JESUS CASTRO**, age 19, guilty of three counts of robbery affecting interstate commerce and three counts of carrying a firearm in relation to a crime of violence. The three counts of carrying a firearm during a crime of violence carry a minimum mandatory sentence of 57 years' imprisonment. Any additional sentence imposed in the three armed robberies must be served consecutively. Castro and his co-defendant, Antale Williams, age 25, of Vero Beach, previously had been indicted by a federal grand jury on September 24, 2003.

According to the evidence presented at the trial, Castro and Williams robbed three Brevard County convenience stores between January 5-7, 2003. The stores are located in Palm Bay, Titusville and Mims, Florida and are owned by the 7-11 Corporation and The Pantry, Inc. During the three day robbery spree, Castro used a semi-automatic pistol to threaten customers and store clerks while Williams physically assaulted store employees. The combined robberies netted the pair a total of just over \$300.

The case represents the culmination of a cooperative effort between the United States Attorney's Office, the State Attorney's Office for Brevard/Seminole Counties, the

Titusville Police Department, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, the Orange County Sheriff's Office, the Palm Bay Police Department, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"). This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from the ATF. United States Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials, calling our effort "Project Safe Neighborhoods - Operation HALT the Violence!" The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

Castro will be sentenced on March 3, 2004 by the Honorable U.S. District Court Judge Anne C. Conway. Williams remains in custody awaiting trial in early January. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert E. Bodnar, Jr. and Special Assistant United States Attorney Gregory J. Konieczka.