

News Release  
U.S. Department of Justice  
United States Attorney  
District of Rhode Island

January 18, 2005



## Providence man admits gun offense

**Dara Veng**, of Providence, pleaded guilty today to being a felon in possession of a firearm. He admitted that he had a loaded handgun in the basement of his residence on Queen Street in November 2003, when Providence Police searched the residence.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the guilty plea, which Veng entered today as his trial was about to begin before Chief U.S. District Court Judge Ernest C. Torres in U.S. District Court, Providence.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Adi Goldstein said that, had the trial proceeded, the government would have proven that Providence Police Officers Thomas Zincone and Dennis O'Brien, acting on an unrelated warrant, arrested Veng outside his residence on November 8, 2003. The officers then searched the residence and found a handgun hidden in a stack of tires in the basement. They suspected a handgun was in the residence after they found an aluminum storm door, riddled with bullet holes, in the basement. The gun, a 9-millimeter pistol, was fully loaded with 12 rounds. Officers also found a loaded clip and a half-full box of ammunition.

Veng, 23, pleaded guilty to one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm. The statutory maximum penalty is ten years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. Veng is detained in federal custody pending sentencing, which is scheduled for April 8. He has

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prior felony convictions for drug trafficking, breaking and entering, and possessing a stolen motor vehicle.

**Providence Police** and the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney's Goldstein and Stephen G. Dambruch are prosecuting the case as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with Providence Police, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 550 years in federal prison.

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