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Project Safe Neighborhoods :

HARTFORD MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL GUN CHARGE

Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, today announced that JOSHUA L. CUPE, age 23, of 52 Atwood Street, Hartford, Connecticut, has pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. CUPE's plea of guilty was accepted by United States District Judge Christopher F. Droney on March 7 in Hartford.

On January 11, 2005, a federal grand jury sitting in Hartford returned an Indictment charging CUPE with the offense. In pleading guilty, CUPE admitted that, on October 26, 2004, he knowingly possessed a Smith & Wesson, Model 19-4, caliber .357 Magnum revolver. The gun, which was loaded, was seized from CUPE's person by Hartford police officers on that date. CUPE also acknowledged that he was previously convicted in state court on December 22, 1999, for carrying a pistol without a permit, and on June 11, 1998, for sale of a controlled substance.

CUPE faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years and a fine of up to \$250,000 when he is sentenced by Judge Droney on May 26, 2005.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and officers of the Hartford Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Brian P. Leaming.

United States Attorney O'Connor noted that this prosecution is part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. The Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is aimed at reducing gun violence, deterring illegal possession of guns, and improving the safety of

residents in Hartford and other Connecticut cities. Participants in the initiative include community members and organizations as well as federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. More information on the nationwide Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative can be found at www.psn.gov <<http://www.psn.gov>>.

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