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**FELON IN POSSESSION OF A FIREARM SENTENCED TO 13 YEARS**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein announces that today U.S. District Court Judge Richard D. Bennett sentenced Howard Dwayne Mitchell, Jr., age 23, of Baltimore, to 156 months in prison followed by 6 years of supervised release for possession of a firearm by a felon, and possession of heroin with intent to distribute.

According to the statement of facts presented to the court, on August 1, 2004 Baltimore City police officers observed Mitchell driving a car at a high rate of speed on North Greene Street in Baltimore. The officers overtook the car when it stopped at a traffic light. When they approached the car, Mitchell appeared to be trying to reach or hide something under his seat. Concerned that Mitchell might be reaching for a weapon, one of the officers started to remove Mitchell from the car. Mitchell pulled out a gun. Mitchell and the officer wrestled, and Mitchell fled on foot, dropping a plastic bag containing 49 gel capsules which held 17.89 grams of heroin, 27 green top glass vials which held 26.90 grams of cocaine, and three green glassine baggies which held less than one gram of cocaine base. Mitchell was subsequently apprehended. Mitchell had attempted to hide his weapon - a Colt.357 magnum "King Cobra" revolver with an attached scope mount - which was loaded with six rounds of ammunition, behind two air conditioning units in Cider Alley.

The statement of facts states that an inventory search of Mitchell's car conducted after his arrest revealed a plastic bag inside the driver's side door pocket that contained an additional six rounds of ammunition, a portable electronic scale commonly used in the distribution of narcotics and \$550 in cash. Mitchell was ineligible to possess firearms or ammunition because he had previously been convicted in Maryland state courts on at least three criminal charges.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Baltimore City Police Department for their investigative work. Mr. Rosenstein commended Assistant United States Attorney Jefferson M. Gray, who prosecuted the case.