



PRESS NOTICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARMED ROBBERS AGREE TO LENGTHY SENTENCES

Columbia, South Carolina ---- United States Attorney W. WALTER WILKINS stated that Eugene Sutton, 20, of Darlington, and Terrell Audre Lovelace, age 19, of Bishopville, who were responsible for three armed robberies of Darlington businesses in September of 2007, pled guilty in federal court to armed robbery and possessing a firearm during a crime of violence. The government and the defense stipulated in plea agreements that Lovelace should receive a sentence of 22 years imprisonment and Sutton should receive a sentence of 17 years imprisonment. United States District Judge Terry L. Wooten accepted the pleas and will sentence the men at a later date.

Evidence presented in court established that on September 7, 2007, Lovelace and Sutton were involved with two others in the armed robbery of the

Spring Mart, located at 413 Spring Street in Darlington. During the robbery, a co-defendant pointed a .38 caliber gun and hit the clerk in the head with the butt of the gun before leaving. The four split the \$500 in cash they stole from the store.

On September 9, 2007, Lovelace, Sutton, and another man robbed the Exxon, located at 460 Lamar Highway in Timmonsville, at gunpoint. During the robbery, Lovelace and the co-defendant brandished handguns, while Sutton remained as the lookout in the getaway car. The three split the \$100 stolen from the store.

On September 17, 2007, Lovelace, Sutton, and three others robbed the Jin Jon Chinese restaurant on Pearl Street in Darlington at gunpoint.

The case was investigated by the Darlington County Sheriff's Office and agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Assistant United States Attorney Rose Mary Parham of the Florence office is prosecuting the case as part of Project CeaseFire, an initiative of the United States Attorneys Office that seeks to aggressively prosecute gun-related crimes.

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