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**BALTIMORE FELON EXILED TO OVER 6 YEARS IN PRISON FOR
ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM**

Baltimore, Maryland - Chief U.S. District Judge Benson E. Legg sentenced Earnest Minor, Jr., age 29, of Baltimore, Maryland, today to 80 months in prison, followed by four years of supervised release for being a felon in possession of a firearm, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Baltimore City State's Attorney Patricia C. Jessamy.

"Any criminal who carries a gun should be prepared to spend many years in prison," said United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein.

"Criminals should take note: this is one of many cases where state and federal prosecutors are working with experienced investigators armed with compelling evidence and witnesses to identify illegal activity so that we can successfully prosecute cases and EXILE defendants to long prison sentences outside of Baltimore," said State's Attorney Patricia C. Jessamy.

Gregory K. Gant, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Baltimore Field Office stated, "We continue our commitment to reduce violent crime by doing our part to put these dangerous armed offenders in jail for a very long time."

According to the plea agreement, on October 30, 2006, an officer with the Baltimore Police Department observed Minor exit a black Lexus LS400 in the 3300 block of E. Fayette Street in Baltimore and noticed that he had a large bulge in the front of his waist area, which he was holding with his right hand. The officer pulled his marked vehicle into a parking lot across the street and continued to watch Minor while he ran the tags on the Lexus. Investigation revealed that the vehicle was registered to Earnest Minor, Jr., whose driving privileges had been suspended. Since Minor appeared to be armed, the officer summoned additional plain clothes officers to assist him.

Minor got back into the black Lexus and attempted to drive away. The officers stopped Minor in the 100 block of N. Clinton Street. Minor exited his vehicle holding his waistband area and ran inside an open garage of a business located in that block. The officers apprehended

Minor after a brief chase and recovered a loaded Phoenix Arms .22 caliber semi-automatic handgun, Model HP22 from Minor's front pants pocket. Also recovered from Minor was a gel cap with heroin.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein and Baltimore City State's Attorney Patricia C. Jessamy thanked the Baltimore City Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for their assistance in the investigation. Mr. Rosenstein and Mrs. Jessamy commended Special Assistant United States Attorney James S. Francomano, a cross-designated Baltimore City Assistant State's Attorney assigned to EXILE cases, who prosecuted the case.