



Department of Justice

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**BIRMINGHAM FELON SENTENCED TO 175 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR
ILLEGAL FIREARM POSSESSION**

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA—

Leura G. Canary, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Alabama, announced today that Mario Holifield, age 29, of Birmingham, Alabama, was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Montgomery, Alabama, to 175 months in federal prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

On August 9, 2006, Holifield pled guilty to possessing a firearm despite several prior felony convictions. Federal law prohibits convicted felons from possessing firearms. Holifield had multiple prior felony convictions, including convictions for robbery and manslaughter. Federal law prohibits convicted felons from possessing firearms.

The offense occurred when a Montgomery Police officer conducted a traffic stop of Holifield's vehicle in Montgomery on August 9, 2006. At the time, Holifield was wanted on an outstanding warrant. Holifield ran from the vehicle in an attempt to elude police. He was located shortly afterward and taken into custody without further incident. When he was arrested, Holifield was found to be in possession of a loaded pistol. Holifield was originally charged with a second count of possessing a firearm in Chilton County, on October 31, 2006, but that charge was dismissed at sentencing.

The case was investigated as part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe

Neighborhoods and the Middle District of Alabama's Alabama ICE (Isolating the Criminal Element) programs, aimed at preventing violent crime and the illegal possession of firearms. According to United States Attorney Leura G. Canary, "This case is another example of the continuing effort to remove violent offenders such as Holifield from our streets. By prosecuting felons who possess firearms, we make our communities safer and prevent violent gun crime."

This case was investigated through the joint efforts of the Montgomery Police Department, the Chilton County Sheriff's Office, the Chilton County District Attorney's Office, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U. S. Attorney Matthew Shepherd.