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NEWS RELEASE

CRIMINAL INFORMATION FILED AGAINST CORRECTIONAL OFFICER WHO ALLEGEDLY SMUGGLED IN TOBACCO FOR INMATES

Dennis C. Pfannenschmidt, the United States Attorney for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, announced today that he has filed one-count Criminal Information against Jeremy D. Stark, age 32, of Lake Ariel, Pennsylvania.

The Criminal Information avers that the Defendant, Jeremy D. Stark, was a former government employee who served as a Correctional Officer at the United States Penitentiary-Canaan, located in Waymart, Pennsylvania. The Criminal Information noted that USP-Canaan is a high security institution housing male inmates, with a satellite camp that houses male minimum security inmates. High security institutions, also known as United States Penitentiaries, have highly-secured perimeters featuring walls or reinforced fences, multiple- and single-occupant cell housing, the highest staff-to-inmate ratio, and close control of inmate movement. The Criminal Information further noted that USP-Canaan is a smoke-free environment and inmates are not allowed to purchase or possess any kind of tobacco product within the institution, and that tobacco is considered contraband within the institution. The Criminal Information noted that tobacco that is smuggled into the institution is sold by inmates to each other at a price of approximately \$10 a cigarette and \$1,000 a carton. The Criminal Information averred that beginning in May 2009 and continuing to August 7, 2009, Stark accepted more than \$3000 in bribes from inmates in return for his smuggling tobacco into the institution.

If convicted on the charge in the Criminal Information, Stark faces a maximum of fifteen years' imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Assistant U.S. Attorney John Gurganus is prosecuting the case.

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A Criminal Information is not evidence of guilt but simply a description of the charge made by the United States Attorney against a defendant. A charged defendant is presumed innocent until a jury returns a unanimous finding that the United States has proved the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.