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**FORMER DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE EMPLOYEE SENTENCED TO
OVER 20 YEARS IN PRISON ON FEDERAL DRUG AND GUN CHARGES**

Defendant Was a Justice Department Legal Assistant in Washington, DC, at Time of Drug Arrest

Greenbelt, Maryland - U.S. District Judge Alexander Williams, Jr. sentenced Wilson Lee Garrett, age 37, of Waldorf, Maryland, who was a legal assistant at the Department of Justice when he was arrested in 2009, to serve 248 months in prison, followed by five years of supervised release, for conspiracy to distribute cocaine and attempted and actual possession with intent to distribute cocaine, and possession of firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. Judge Williams also ordered Garrett to forfeit \$100,000, the proceeds of the conspiracy. Garrett was convicted on May 26, 2011, after an eight day jury trial.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Special Agent in Charge Ava Cooper-Davis of the Drug Enforcement Administration - Washington Field Division; St. Mary's County Sheriff Tim Cameron; Charles County Sheriff Rex Coffey; Chief Mark A. Magaw of the Prince George's County Police Department; Acting Inspector General Cynthia A. Schnedar of the U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General; and Special Agent in Charge Richard A. McFeely of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"Wilson Lee Garrett worked for the United States Department of Justice, but he did not share its values," said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein. "The evidence proved that Mr. Garrett was an armed drug dealer on the streets and a perjurer in the courtroom."

"Mr. Garrett not only broke the law by drug trafficking, he betrayed the trust bestowed upon him by the public," stated Ava A. Cooper-Davis Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration. "Instead of retiring with a federal pension, he will get out of prison with a federal criminal record."

According to the evidence presented at Garrett's trial, from mid-2006 through February 2007, Garrett conspired to purchase 20 to 25 kilograms of cocaine for \$24,000 per kilogram. Witnesses testified that at the beginning of the conspiracy, Garrett purchased one kilogram of cocaine approximately every two to four weeks, but after a few transactions, Garrett began

obtaining four kilograms every three to four weeks until February 2007, for a total of approximately 20 to 25 kilograms of cocaine.

In February and March 2009, during a series of phone calls and meetings that were recorded and monitored by law enforcement, Garrett arranged to purchase one kilogram of cocaine for \$32,000. On March 18, 2009, Garrett arranged to meet his supplier on 28th Street in Temple Hills, Maryland, to purchase the kilogram of cocaine. Before he reached the meeting location, Garrett was stopped by a Prince George's County marked police unit. Officers searched Garrett and located \$32,000 in \$100 bills in Garrett's jacket pocket. A trained drug-sniffing K-9 alerted to the presence of narcotics in Garrett's vehicle and on the \$32,000. Garrett subsequently called his supplier to cancel the meeting because the police had stopped him and taken his money.

On May 15, 2009, a search warrant was executed at Garrett's residence in the 13000 block of Long House Court in Waldorf. Agents recovered 3.4 grams of cocaine from the pocket of Garrett's jacket located in his master bedroom closet, \$7,000 in cash wrapped in rubber bands in the same suitcase as cocaine crumbles, an additional \$560 wrapped in a rubber band, a digital scale, a money counter, and six cellular phones. From a drawer of the nightstand in Garrett's bedroom, agents found a loaded Beretta 9mm handgun, an Astra 9mm handgun, and a loaded Taurus Ultra Lite .38 caliber handgun.

At trial, Garrett testified that the recorded phone conversations were not about a cocaine transaction, but were about a contract where Garrett was agreeing to promote and partially fund a concert at Constitution Hall in April 2009. Garrett testified that the \$32,000 discussed in those calls and meetings was about the price for one artist to perform at the concert, and was not the agreed-upon price for one kilogram of cocaine. Garrett produced a contract that he admitted to creating that he claimed related to the April concert. Garrett also testified that the jacket found in his closet, and the cocaine found in the pocket of the jacket, belonged to men who worked in his home. Garrett claimed that he had never purchased cocaine.

After the jury returned its verdict in May, Judge Williams found that Garrett had lied in his testimony and immediately took him into custody. He remains detained.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked the Drug Enforcement Administration, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, Charles County Sheriff's Office, Department of Justice - Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their investigative work. Mr. Rosenstein commended Assistant United States Attorneys Christen A. Sproule and James A. Crowell IV, who prosecuted the case.