



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
District of Maryland

Erek L. Barron
United States Attorney

Marcia A. Murphy
Public Affairs Specialist

36 South Charles Street
4th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4885
FAX 410-962-3091
Marcia.Murphy@usdoj.gov

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Contact MARCIA MURPHY
at (410) 209-4854

TWO HARFORD COUNTY COCAINE DEALERS CONVICTED AFTER FEDERAL TRIAL FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN A DRUG DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY

Baltimore, Maryland – A federal jury convicted Che Jaron Durbin, age 43, of Aberdeen, Maryland and Terrell Darnell Walton, age 36, of Delaware, yesterday on federal charges related to their participation in a drug trafficking organization distributing cocaine and crack cocaine in Harford County, Maryland. Specifically, the jury convicted Durbin and Walton for conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute cocaine and crack cocaine. The jury also found Durbin guilty of two counts of possession with intent to distribute cocaine.

The guilty verdict was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Erek L. Barron; Harford County State's Attorney Albert J. Peisinger, Jr.; Assistant Special Agent in Charge Orville O. Greene of the Drug Enforcement Administration; Sheriff Jeffrey Gahler of the Harford County Sheriff's Office; and the Harford County Drug Task Force, a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program, comprised of members of the Harford County Sheriff's Office, the Aberdeen Police Department, the Bel Air Police Department, and the Havre de Grace Police Department.

According to evidence presented at the eight-day trial, in May 2019, members of the Harford County Drug Task Force were investigating Durbin, who was suspected of drug trafficking in the Harford County area. Durbin testified at trial that he had a previous federal drug trafficking conviction in Maryland, as well as a previous conviction in Harford County Circuit Court for drug trafficking.

Witnesses testified that on May 17, 2019, a U.S. Postal Inspector notified detectives that a suspicious package was en route to Durbin's mother's apartment in Aberdeen, Maryland. Detectives watched as a U.S. Postal Service mail carrier delivered the parcel to Durbin, who took it into the apartment. A short time later, a woman, later identified as co-defendant Jameka Cara Thompson, left the apartment with the parcel and drove to her home. Law enforcement detained Thompson and obtained a search warrant for her vehicle. The parcel was found to contain one kilogram of compressed cocaine. Further investigation revealed that co-defendant Jack Anderson from Tucson, Arizona was the sender of the package.

On January 22, 2020, law enforcement learned from U.S. Postal Inspectors that Durbin sent a parcel from Havre de Grace, Maryland, addressed to Anderson in Tucson, Arizona. A search warrant was obtained for the parcel after a K9 gave a positive alert. The parcel contained \$82,300 in cash inside a wireless headphones box.

In February 2020, as part of the investigation, law enforcement intercepted Durbin's

communications, as well as those of Anderson, Walton, and other co-defendants to whom Durbin supplied cocaine and crack. The evidence at trial also showed that Walton obtained cocaine from Durbin, which Walton then sold to a network of individuals in Harford County. Intercepted communications between Durbin and Walton included discussions regarding the amounts of drugs and the price, often using coded language.

According to trial testimony, in May 2020, law enforcement surveilled Durbin meeting with Anderson at a Tucson, Arizona hotel. Soon after the meeting, Durbin picked Thompson up at the Tucson Airport and drove her back to his hotel room. Durbin flew back to Maryland the next day and Thompson ultimately obtained a bulk supply of cocaine from Anderson on Durbin's behalf. Thompson drove cross-country from Arizona to Harford County, where she was arrested on May 12, 2020. Law enforcement searched her vehicle, seizing an additional 1.4 kilograms of cocaine. Durbin was also arrested. According to trial testimony, over the course of the conspiracy Thompson made at least eight similar trips on Durbin's behalf, transporting almost 40 kilograms of cocaine to Maryland for Durbin to distribute.

Durbin and Walton each face a maximum sentence of 40 years in federal prison for conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute cocaine and crack cocaine. Durbin also faces a maximum of 40 years in federal prison for each of two counts of possession with intent to distribute cocaine. U.S. District Judge George L. Russell, III has not scheduled sentencing dates for Durbin or Walton.

Co-defendant Jack Anderson IV, age 45, of Tucson, Arizona, was sentenced to 126 months in federal prison in December 2021, after Anderson entered a guilty plea to conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine. Co-defendants Jameka Cara Thompson, age 41, of Abingdon, Maryland; Garrick Devlon Jackson, age 39, of Havre de Grace, Maryland; and Michael Ronnell Wells, age 37, of Forest Hill, Maryland, previously pleaded guilty to their participation in the conspiracy and are awaiting sentencing.

United States Attorney Erek L. Barron commended the Harford County State's Attorney's Office, the DEA, the Harford County Sheriff's Office, and the Harford County Drug Task Force for their work in the investigation and thanked the U.S. Postal Inspection Service for its assistance. Mr. Barron thanked Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christopher J. Romano and Jason X. Hamilton, who are prosecuting the case.

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