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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 7, 2024

Re: State v. Gary Dashon Davenport

On Tuesday, March 5, 2024, Gary Dashon Davenport, 44, of Edgewood, was found guilty of First Degree Assault, Second Degree Assault, Illegal Possession of a Firearm By a Person with a Felony Conviction, Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Crime of Violence, Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting a Handgun on a Person, and Transporting a Handgun in a Vehicle following a two-day jury trial before the Honorable Yolanda Curtin.

Evidence presented in trial showed that on August 11, 2023, officers of the Aberdeen Police Department responded to Horizon Cinemas for reports of an assault with a weapon. Upon arrival, officers learned that a red Kia arrived at the movie theater and entered the parking lot at a high rate of speed. Gary Dashon Davenport was in the passenger seat of that vehicle. Officers reviewed surveillance footage from the Horizon Cinema and Aberdeen Marketplace, which showed Davenport and another individual exiting the vehicle, running into the theater, and chasing after a group of juveniles. Upon exiting the theater, Davenport was observed removing a firearm from a black satchel, holding it down by his side and hunting the juveniles through the parking lot. Davenport's accomplice re-entered the Kia, weaving throughout the parking lot directly towards the fleeing juveniles. Eventually, Davenport re-entered the Kia and continued to chase the juveniles to the rear of Aberdeen Marketplace and into the parking lot of Aberdeen Proving Ground Federal Credit Union where witnesses heard a gunshot. Officers of the Aberdeen Police Department were able to recover one .40 cal. shell casing at the entrance to the APGFCU parking lot where the red Kia entered. Surveillance footage showed the juveniles reacting to the gunshot and running in the opposite direction with one juvenile hiding behind an electrical box for cover. Det. Soto of the Aberdeen Police Department Criminal Investigation Division investigated the matter and was able to identify Davenport as the individual who chased the juveniles with the handgun. Additionally, a Search and Seizure warrant was executed, and clothing matching what Davenport was wearing on the night of the offense was recovered. Evidence presented also showed that Gary Dashon Davenport is prohibited from possessing firearms due to his previous conviction for Second Degree Murder in 2008. At the time of this incident, Davenport was on parole for that offense after being released from custody in 2022.

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At the sentencing hearing on Thursday, March 7, 2024, Assistant State's Attorney Jeremy Brooks argued for the maximum sentence in this case, which is an upward deviation from the 10 to 15 year sentence calculated by the Maryland Automated Sentencing Guidelines. Mr. Brooks further argued that the court needed to send a strong message that "shows the citizens of Harford County that violence against children will not be tolerated." He added that given the nature of this offense, as well as the prior violent felony conviction, the upward deviation in sentencing was appropriate.

Ultimately, Davenport was sentenced by the Honorable Yolanda Curtin to the maximum penalty allowable by law - 60 years to serve, with the first 20 years being mandatory and without the possibility of parole. In addition, as a result of the conviction in this case, Davenport was also found in violation of probation in the 2008 Second Degree Murder case. At the request of Assistant State's Attorney Vincenzo Culotta, the court further imposed the remaining 10 years of that sentence as a result of the violation and ordered that it be served consecutively to the sentence in this case, for a total sentence of 70 years to serve. Davenport's accomplice has also been charged and is pending trial in this matter. The trial is scheduled for later this year.

Following the sentencing, State's Attorney Alison M. Healey issued the following statement: "From an evidentiary standpoint, this case was challenging, but as our office has proven repeatedly, we will not shy away from bringing tough cases to trial, and we will do so successfully. Justice prevailed when the jury returned guilty verdicts in this case, and our citizens are safer for it. The citizens of this county should be free to take their children to the movies without the threat of gunfire and without any fear for their safety. This kind of violent criminal behavior that puts innocent people at risk will not be tolerated in our community. I commend Assistant State's Attorney Jeremy Brooks and Assistant State's Attorney Vincenzo Culotta for their incredibly hard work in this case to ensure that this Defendant, who already has a history of extreme violence, is incarcerated for the maximum time allowable by law."

State's Attorney Healey continued by expressing her gratitude to Detective Soto, Officer Kinlaw, and the other members of the Aberdeen Police Department that worked tirelessly to investigate this case and to ensure that those responsible were charged and held accountable.