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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, September 22, 2006

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24 Defendants Indicted in Woodland Terrace Drug Investigation

Public Housing Safety Initiative Targeted Drug Trafficking in 5-Month Investigation

Washington, D.C. - Twenty four individuals have been indicted by a Superior Court grand jury on charges of narcotics distribution as a result of a five-month investigation in the Woodland Terrace Public Housing property, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein, Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Chief Charles H. Ramsey and D.C. Housing Authority Police Department (DCHA PD) Chief William L. Pittman.

The investigation was part of a new Public Housing Safety Initiative, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, to target drug trafficking and violent crime in public housing. "This investigation clearly demonstrates the benefits of effective coordination between federal and local law enforcement to target violent crime and drugs in D.C. public housing," said U.S. Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein.

Between April and August 2006, undercover drug operations were conducted by officers from MPD's Seventh Police District, with assistance from the D.C. Housing Authority Police Department and agents from the Office of the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD OIG). The five-month investigation targeted the sale of PCP and other illegal drugs within the Woodland Terrace public housing complex. Officers conducted 63 undercover drug purchases, recovering PCP, cocaine, marijuana and ecstasy. All drug sales occurred in "drug free" zones and many were conducted in open areas where young children were playing at the time.

In addition to the twenty four arrest warrants obtained over the last several weeks, MPD, DCHA PD, and OIG agents have executed 6 search warrants, seized two vehicles in connection

with drug trafficking, recovered two firearms and seized narcotics and drug paraphernalia from inside two Woodland Terrace apartments. Consistent with the D.C. Housing Authority's Operation Fightback, DCHA PD and HUD OIG will aggressively pursue evictions against those public housing residents actively engaged in drug trafficking and/or violent criminal activity. "Our message is clear - illegal drugs and violent crime will not be tolerated in our public housing communities. We will work aggressively to evict these criminals who are involved in drug dealing under our Operation Fightback Program," said DCHA Chief William L. Pittman. "The D.C. Housing Authority remains fully committed to providing safe and secure properties for our law-abiding residents."

Woodland Terrace

Woodland Terrace is a 234-unit public housing development, managed by the D.C. Housing Authority. Located in Ward 8 and policed by MPD's Seventh District, the property borders Ainger Place, Bruce Place, Reynolds Place and Langston Place. Police have responded to numerous calls for service in the Woodland Terrace neighborhood over the past two years, including calls related to homicides, shootings, drug crimes and assaults. They also have made a significant number of drug arrests in the complex.

Public Housing Safety Initiative

The District of Columbia is one of 20 communities nationwide selected for this new initiative, which focuses on reducing drug trafficking and violence crime in federally-funded housing and public housing. Goals of the initiative include enhanced law enforcement, providing an infusion of community-based resources, developing youth mentoring programs, and addressing quality of life issues in public housing areas. The Public Housing Safety Initiative provides \$400,000 federal funding for increased law enforcement and \$200,000 to provide community-based social services.

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