



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Carter M. Stewart
Southern District of Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2013
<http://www.justice.gov/usao/ohs>

CONTACT: Fred Alverson
614-469-5715

SIX CHARGED IN HEROIN TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY

CINCINNATI – A federal grand jury has charged six people, including four Middletown residents, with conspiring to distribute heroin, a crime punishable by at least ten years and up to life in prison.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Kevin Cornelius, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation Cincinnati Field Division (FBI), Commander John Burke of the Warren County Drug Task Force and Middletown Police Chief David VanArsdale announced the indictment which was unsealed today after the defendants were all arrested.

The indictment charges the following defendants with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute heroin:

Starling Groves Jr, 43, Dayton
Darnell Jack South III, aka “Jack” “Black”, 38, Middletown
Eric Redding, aka “Eric Page”, 41, Middletown
Cheltzy Redding, 28, Middletown
Adam Gardner, 27, Middletown
and Thomas Payne, aka “Tommy”, 49, Lebanon

The investigation began in August 2012 when Middletown Police approached the FBI with information about the drug trafficking organization after noticing a significant increase in heroin-related criminal activity in and around Middletown. U.S. Attorney Stewart commended the cooperative investigation by the law enforcement agencies and other members of the Ohio High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) task force and Assistant U.S. Attorney Karl Kadon is representing the United States in the case.

The indictment also charges Groves, South and Eric Redding with distributing more than 100 grams of heroin, a crime punishable by at least five years and up to 40 years in prison. South faces a potential mandatory life sentence, and Groves’ sentence may be a mandatory minimum of twenty years under federal law.

Eric and Cheltzy Redding are charged with maintaining premises for the storage of heroin, a crime punishable by a sentence ranging from probation to 20 years in prison.

Officers arrested Groves, South and Eric Redding on May 9 and seized approximately 750 grams of heroin. Officers arrested Cheltzy Redding, Gardner and Payne today. U.S. Magistrate Judge Stephanie K. Bowman ordered all of them held without bond.

If convicted of any of the crimes alleged in the indictment, the defendants must also forfeit any proceeds or profits they received from the conspiracy, in addition to any prison sentence they may receive.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

###