

# Twenty Members Of Springfield Street Gangs, Others Indicted On Drug Trafficking

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**SPRINGFIELD** - More than 20 members and associates of Springfield street gangs and others have been indicted on federal and state drug trafficking and related charges within the past week. The charges allege the individuals have engaged in various capacities to distribute drugs, including cocaine, crack cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin and fentanyl in Springfield in 2019 and 2020.

These charges are the result of an ongoing joint effort by federal, state and local law enforcement to address drug trafficking and related violence in Springfield. Participating agencies include the Drug Enforcement Administration; Springfield Police Department; Federal Bureau of Investigation; and, the Illinois State Police. The U.S. Attorney's Office and the Sangamon County State's Attorney's Office are prosecuting the cases.

To date, 15 individuals charged have been arrested. A listing of the federal and state defendants arrested is attached; the names of those charged but not yet apprehended are not included.

The federal defendants have been charged with conspiracy to distribute large quantities of deadly drugs, including fentanyl and carry penalties of up to life in prison if convicted. This includes conspiracy to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, along with conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, crack and heroin. The indictment includes special findings for two defendants, Derrick Bailey and Denziel Witherspoon, for prior federal convictions for possession with intent to distribute drugs. Four defendants, including Bailey, D. Witherspoon, and Cooper, have been charged with possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense, a charge that carries a statutory penalty of five years to life to be served consecutive to any sentence ordered for the underlying drug offense.

"These charges represent another chapter in the cooperative effort to disrupt drug distribution and violence in Springfield," stated U.S. Attorney John Milhiser. "This is an ongoing operation and we will continue to identify, prosecute, and take off the streets those who seek to cause harm in our communities."

"This wave of collaborative enforcement demonstrates the ongoing commitment of our federal, state and local authorities to combat violent crime and drug trafficking in Springfield," said Sangamon County State's Attorney Dan Wright. "We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to remove violent criminals and drug dealers from our community."

Springfield Police Chief Kenny Winslow issued the following statement:

First and foremost, I would like to recognize the cooperative effort of law enforcement in Sangamon County for this multi-month, multi-jurisdictional investigation. It is widely

known among law enforcement in Springfield that gangs, guns, and illegal sales of narcotics are intermingled with other criminal activity. These individuals and their associates have wreaked havoc on our community for far too long by distributing dangerous drugs to our citizens and others while being involved in other illegal and violent activity.

While this is an ongoing investigation and we anticipate additional arrests, let this be a strong message to those involved in criminal activity that law enforcement in Sangamon County continues to work together to remove and hold responsible parties accountable for such crimes.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) investigation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; each defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.SP