



# Department of Justice

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## Michigan Man Sentenced to 105 Years for Armed Drug Trafficking and Attempted Robbery

**LONDON, Ky.**— A Flint, Michigan man, Charles Ray Edwards, 39, was sentenced to 105 years in federal prison on Tuesday, by U.S. District Judge Robert E. Wier, after being convicted of armed drug trafficking and attempted robbery.

In July 2022, Edwards was convicted of heroin trafficking, fentanyl trafficking, conspiracy to distribute both substances, felon in possession of a firearm, use of a firearm in furtherance of the drug trafficking, and for his role in an attempted Hobbs Act robbery at a convenience store. His trafficking and robbery offenses involved three shooting victims, including the death of a bystander in the convenience store.

According to testimony at trial, Edwards was dealing heroin and fentanyl in Southeastern Kentucky region. As part of his drug trafficking crimes, Edwards wounded two individuals in a shooting incident in Knox County. Then, during the attempted robbery, a bystander in the store was shot and killed. Edwards has a prior felony conviction and was prohibited from possessing firearms.

“Charles Edwards was trafficking in dangerous drugs, attempted to hold up a store, was involved in multiple shootings – one resulting in the death of a bystander – and did all this with firearms he was prohibited from possessing,” said Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. “There is little question his conduct warrants the sentence imposed, and that our communities will now be safer for his incarceration. We will prioritize the prosecution of those who engage in such reckless and destructive violence and continue to do our part to protect our communities. We hope this will provide some sense of justice to the victims and are grateful for the critical efforts of our law enforcement partners.”

“ATF’s core mission is to protect the public from violent criminals like Charles Edwards,” said ATF Special Agent in Charge R. Shawn Morrow of the Louisville Field Division. “Armed drug trafficking and violence go hand in hand. Today, Edwards was held accountable for his actions because of the hard work of our ATF London Office, Kentucky State Police, Williamsburg Police Department, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office. This investigation demonstrates

our continued commitment to stopping violent criminals and the drug traffickers that plague our Eastern Kentucky communities.”

United States Attorney Shier; ATF SAC Morrow; Colonel Phillip Burnett Jr., Commissioner, Kentucky State Police; and Chief Jason Caddell, Williamsburg Police Department, jointly announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by the ATF, KSP, and Williamsburg Police Department. The United States was represented in the case by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jenna Reed and Jason Parman.

This case prosecuted as part of the Department of Justice’s “Project Safe Neighborhoods” Program (PSN), which is a nationwide, crime reduction strategy aimed at decreasing violent crime in communities. The PSN program involves a comprehensive approach to public safety — one that includes investigating and prosecuting crimes, along with prevention and reentry efforts. In the Eastern District of Kentucky, U.S. Attorney Shier coordinates PSN efforts in cooperation with various federal, state, and local law enforcement officials.

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