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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, May 3, 2016

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District Man Sentenced to 77 Months in Prison For Robbing Two Grocery Stores Over Five-Day Period Quick Police Response Led to Defendant's Arrest After Second Robbery

WASHINGTON - Christopher Tyler, 38, of Washington, D.C., was sentenced today to a 77-month prison term on federal charges stemming from two robberies of grocery stores, U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips announced.

Tyler pled guilty in March 2016, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, to two counts of interference with interstate commerce by robbery. He was sentenced by the Honorable Tanya S. Chutkan. Following his prison term, he will be placed on three years of supervised release.

According to the government's evidence, on July 25, 2014, at approximately 10:50 p.m., Tyler entered a Safeway store in the 1600 block of Maryland Avenue NE. He was wearing a mask and was armed with what appeared to be a black handgun. Tyler pointed the weapon at store employees and demanded that they "open the money room." A cashier indicated that she did not have a key to the room. Tyler then used a newspaper rack to climb over a wall into the room where the store's safe was located. He then robbed the store of money that had been received through that evening's sales. He fled and was not apprehended that night.

On July 30, 2014, at approximately 10:50 p.m., Tyler entered another Safeway store, this time in the 1100 block of Fourth Street SW. He again was armed with what appeared to be a black handgun and again was wearing a mask. Tyler forced a store employee to open the room where another employee was counting the night's proceeds and putting the money into the store's safe. He demanded that an employee fill a bag with money.

Tyler then fled the store with approximately \$15,000 in cash. Officers from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), responding to a 911 call for a robbery, arrived just as

Tyler was running from the store. Officers stopped him after a brief foot chase. The officers recovered a black pellet gun that strongly resembles a semi-automatic handgun from the defendant. The officers also recovered the money that he dropped while attempting to escape. Tyler has been in custody since his arrest.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Phillips commended the work of the officers, detectives, and others who worked on the case from the Metropolitan Police Department. He also praised the efforts of those who worked on the case from the FBI's Washington Field Office. Finally, he acknowledged the efforts of those who worked on the case from the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jin Park, Thomas Swanton, and Nihar Mohanty.

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