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County of Warren

CORRECTED PRESS RELEASE

GUILTY PLEA: Justin A. Mercer
Formerly of 31 Carnegie Drive
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

DOB: October 30, 1980

On April 25, 2012, the above named individual entered a guilty plea before the Honorable Ann R. Bartlett, J.S.C. at the Warren County Courthouse. Mercer pled guilty to: (1) Carjacking, a violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:15-2a(4), a first degree crime; (2) Eluding, a violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:29-2b, a second degree crime; and (3) Theft, a violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:20-3a, a third degree crime.

During his plea of guilty to the carjacking offense, Mercer admitted that on October 1, 2011, after being involved in an accident on Interstate Route 80 in Allamuchy Township, he took the car of a motorist who had stopped to provide assistance. Mercer further admitted that at the time he took the vehicle, it was occupied by two children. Mercer admitted that he drove for a distance of a few miles and dropped the children off at a shopping center.

During his plea of guilty to the Theft offense, Mercer admitted that he proceeded into the Town of Hackettstown where he abandoned the carjacked vehicle behind a business. Mercer admitted that he then stole a second car that had been left unlocked and running at the Quick Check store located at the intersection of Route 46 and Stiger Street.

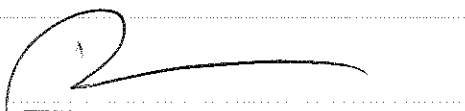
During his plea of guilty to the offense of Eluding, Mercer admitted that he returned to Interstate Route 80 in the stolen vehicle and proceeded eastbound until he was spotted the New Jersey State Police. Mercer admitted that he fled from the New Jersey State Police at a high rate of speed. The pursuit continued from Morris County into Essex County where Mercer admittedly lost control of and crashed the car on the Interstate Route 280 Exit 7 off-ramp in Roseland, New Jersey.

As a result of his pleas of guilty, Mercer is exposed to: (1) a sentence of fifteen (15) years in New Jersey State Prison for the carjacking offense which subject to the provisions of the *No Early Release Act* which requires service of 85% of the sentence which is imposed; (2) a sentence of eight (8) years in New Jersey State Prison for the Eluding offense; and (3) four (4) years in New Jersey State Prison for the Theft offense. The sentences will run concurrently. Sentencing is presently scheduled for June 8, 2012.

Mercer was originally arrested on October 1, 2011 by the New Jersey State Police. The Carjacking and Eluding offenses were investigated by the New Jersey State Police. The Theft offense was investigated by the Hackettstown Police Department. Agencies providing assistance include the Warren County Prosecutor's Office, the Roseland Police Department and the Essex County Sheriff's Department.

The State is represented by Assistant Prosecutor Donald F. Cox, Jr. Mercer is represented by Karl Keys, Esq. of the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender.

APPROVED BY:



RICHARD T. BURKE
Warren County Prosecutor

DATE: May 21, 2012