



Wednesday, August 26, 2020

Cleveland Man Sentenced to 15 – 16 ½ Years in Prison for Violent Crime Spree in April 2019

CLEVELAND – Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael C. O'Malley announced that Clifford Gillespie, 44, was sentenced to 15 to 16 ½ years in prison for a violent crime spree that occurred within a three-hour timespan in April 2019.

"This one-man wrecking crew endangered the lives of numerous victims during his violent crime spree," said Prosecutor O'Malley. "We are all much safer without this criminal running rampant through our streets."

On April 28, 2019, Gillespie carjacked the victim, an 83-year-old woman, at gunpoint in a church parking lot near E. 83rd St. and Quincy Avenue. He approached her vehicle, banged on her windows, and demanded her car keys while threatening to kill her. After the victim exited her vehicle, he took her keys and drove away.

Shortly after, Gillespie drove the stolen vehicle to a laundromat near E. 63rd St. and Fleet Avenue. The defendant began fondling himself in the parking lot in front of a woman, 27, and her cousin. After she told him to stop, he verbally threatened her life and retrieved a gun from the stolen vehicle. He pointed the gun at the victim as he approached her. She ran to the back of the laundromat and called police before Gillespie fled the scene in the vehicle.

Shortly after, Cleveland Division of Police (CDP) spotted the stolen vehicle and attempted to pull him over near E. 74th St. and Harvard Avenue. Gillespie refused and a brief pursuit ensued before he exited the vehicle and ran into a wooded area near E. 79th St. and Holton Avenue. He hid inside a tent as officers with CPD and Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Police gave several commands to surrender. Gillespie refused and made another attempt to flee as he ran toward E. 83rd before pointing his gun at responding officers. Officers discharged their department-issued firearms and Gillespie was struck twice in the leg and arm. Officers administered first aid before EMS arrived and transported him to a nearby hospital where he received treatment and was subsequently arrested.

He pleaded guilty to the following charges:

- **One count of Aggravated Robbery**
- **Five counts of Felonious Assault**
- **Two counts of Having Weapons Under Disability**
- **Two counts of Aggravated Menacing**
- **One count of Public Indecency**

Gillespie was sentenced to a range of 15 to 16 ½ years in prison. He was sentenced under "The Reagan Tokes Law," which implements an indefinite sentencing system for non-life felonies of the first and second-degree in which the judge imposes both a minimum term (from the current sentencing range) and a maximum term (that includes an additional 50% of the minimum term imposed). The Ohio Department of Corrections will review the case and Gillespie's behavior after he has served 15 years and will make a determination as to whether he should be released.