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March 11, 2016

Press Release – Drug Task Force Arrest Southampton Township Heroin Dealer

The Franklin County Drug Task Force (“FCDTF”) had been conducting an ongoing investigation into the distribution of heroin in Southampton Township, Franklin County, Pennsylvania. The investigation centered around the distribution of heroin by Shirley Melendez-Hewitt. Several purchases of heroin had been made from Melendez-Hewitt by the FCDTF during the investigation.

The investigation also revealed Shirley Melendez-Hewitt was communicating with Jose Espinosa while he was lodged in the Franklin County Jail. During February and March, 2016, Espinosa inquired with Melendez-Hewitt about how much heroin she still had in her possession and how much money she had from the proceeds of the heroin sales. From the jail, Espinosa directed Melendez-Hewitt to let him know when she ran out of heroin, so that he would make the arrangements and direct her action to acquire additional quantities of heroin.

On March 8, 2016, at 2158 hours, a search warrant was executed at 7500 Molly Pitcher Highway, Lot 15, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, the home of Shirley Melendez-Hewitt. Melendez-Hewitt had been previously interdicted by members of the Franklin County Drug Task Force. During the search, 397 bags of heroin were seized from the residence along with a sum of U.S. currency.

Melendez-Hewitt was charged with one count of Possession with Intent to Deliver a Controlled Substance and taken to Franklin County Jail where she was arraigned and held on \$175,000 bail. Additional charges will be filed against Melendez-Hewitt for Unlawful Delivery of a Controlled Substance (heroin), in the near future.

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Espinosa was charged with one count of Criminal Conspiracy and arraigned. Bail was set at \$100,000 and he remains in Franklin County Jail.

Anyone with information regarding this investigation or other drug activity occurring within Franklin County is asked to contact the Franklin County Drug Task Force at 1-800-344-3127 or by email at tips@drugtaskforce.org. Anonymous tips may also be submitted through our website: www.drugtaskforce.org. All information provided is confidential and callers may remain anonymous if they wish.



**NOTE: The defendant is accused of the above offenses, and readers are reminded that all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*