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**NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Investigation Leads to Conviction of Madison Man Dealing Crack Cocaine**

MADISON, Wis. – Today, Attorney General Brad Schimel announced Joseph Thigpen, 41, of Madison, Wis., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge William Conley to nearly 17 years in prison for possessing crack cocaine with the intent to distribute.

The charge against Thigpen was the result of an investigation by the Columbia County Sheriff's Office and the Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI). The Columbia County Sheriff's Office requested DCI's assistance in capturing Thigpen after local law enforcement had identified him as a potential drug dealer in the community. Thigpen at the time was under supervised release for prior felony convictions for drug dealing and other crimes.

“The partnership between DCI agents and local law enforcement at the Columbia County Sheriff's Office led to this dealer's arrest, and the U.S. Attorney's Office closed the loop by bringing this dealer to justice in the courts,” said Attorney General Schimel. “Today's conviction is one example of the enforcement necessary to stop this drug epidemic. Holding the dealers who are putting the drugs on our streets accountable must be part of the solution, in addition to educating the public on the dangers of drug abuse, and providing treatment to those struggling with addiction.”

The prosecution of this case was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy M. O'Shea.