PRESS RELEASE

H Block Gang Member Pleads Guilty to Drug Conspiracy

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For Immediate Release
U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – A member of the violent Boston-based gang, H-Block, has pleaded guilty in federal court in Boston to drug conspiracy charges.

Robert Heckstall, a/k/a "Ribbs," a/k/a "Buck," a/k/a "Buck Corleone," 43, of Roxbury, pleaded guilty on to conspiracy to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute PCP, MDMB-4en-PINACA and ADB-4en-PINACA; being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition; and possession with intent to distribute cocaine. U.S. District Court Judge Indira Talwani scheduled sentencing for Jan. 26, 2027.

Heckstall was one of 10 H-Block gang members and associates charged in August 2024 following a multi-year investigation of H-Block beginning in 2021 in response to an uptick in gang-related drug trafficking, shootings and violence. Over 500 grams of cocaine, cocaine base (crack cocaine) and fentanyl, as well as over 20,000 doses of drug-laced paper were seized during the investigation.

According to the charging documents, the H-Block street gang is one of the most feared and influential city-wide gangs in Boston. Originally formed in the 1980s as the Humboldt Raiders in the Roxbury section of Boston, the gang re-emerged in the 2000s as H-Block. Current members of H-Block have a history of violent confrontation with law enforcement, including an incident in 2015 when a member shot a Boston Police officer at point blank range without warning or provocation.

Heckstall was a long-time H-Block gang member and one of three members and associates charged with conspiring to smuggle illegal drugs into a Massachusetts prison. According to court documents, the Massachusetts Department of Correction has seen a significant increase in the smuggling of synthetic cannabinoids, a/k/a "K2," and other dangerous substances into the prison system. A common method of introducing the drugs is by exploiting the Department of Correction's inmate mail policies, which prohibit delivery to inmates of original copies of any materials contained in incoming

mail except for legal mail, original copies of which are inspected and delivered via the U.S. postal system. Sheets of paper are saturated or sprayed with liquid narcotics, dried, printed with fake legal correspondence, and then mailed to inmates in an envelope marked as legal mail, in the hope that the drug-laced paper will be delivered undetected. Several sheets of paper containing PCP (Phenylcyclidine) and illegal K2 were seized over the course of the investigation. It is estimated that a single sheet of such paper would be worth as much as $80,000 inside the prison. Intercepted jail calls revealed that Heckstall along with his co-conspirators, conspired to introduce synthetic drugs into the facilities. When Heckstall was arrested, investigators discovered three firearms and over 60 grams of cocaine in his apartment.

Heckstall is the nineth defendant to plead guilty in the case.

The charges of conspiracy to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute PCP, MDMB-4en-PINACA and ADB-4en-PINACA and possession with intent to distribute cocaine provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least three years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to $1 million. The charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition provides for a sentence of up to 15 years in prison, supervised release for 3 years and a fine of up to $250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Jarod A. Forget, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division; Special Agent in Charge Mark Comorosky of the U.S. Secret Service Boston Field Office; Ted. E. Docks, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; Anthony D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; and Boston Police Commissioner Michael Cox made the announcement. The investigation was supported by the Massachusetts State Police; Suffolk County District Attorney's Office; Massachusetts Department of Corrections; and the Braintree, Quincy, Randolph, and Watertown Police Departments. Assistant United States Attorney John T. Dawley of the Organized Crime & Gang Unit is prosecuting the cases.

This case is part of the Homeland Security Task Force (HSTF) initiative established by Executive Order 14159, Protecting the American People Against Invasion. The HSTF is a whole-of-government partnership dedicated to eliminating criminal cartels, foreign gangs, transnational criminal organizations, and human smuggling and trafficking rings operating in the United States and abroad. Through historic interagency collaboration, the HSTF directs the full might of United States law enforcement towards identifying, investigating, and prosecuting the full spectrum of crimes committed by these

organizations, which have long fueled violence and instability within our borders. In performing this work, the HSTF places special emphasis on investigating and prosecuting those engaged in child trafficking or other crimes involving children. The HSTF further utilizes all available tools to prosecute and remove the most violent criminal aliens from the United States. HSTF Boston comprises agents and officers from HSI, FBI, DEA, ATF, USMS, IRS-CI, USPIS, DOL-OIG and DSS, as well as several state and local law enforcement agencies, with the prosecution being led by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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