

United States Attorney's Office



Northern District of Iowa

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Fentanyl Smuggler and Dealer Sentenced to Over Three Decades in Federal Prison

A Waterloo man who smuggled fentanyl into the United States and distributed it in the Waterloo area was sentenced today to 37 years in federal prison.

Javoni Marcelius Butler, also known as “G Man,” age 44, from Waterloo, Iowa, received the prison term after a September 20, 2024 jury verdict finding him guilty of one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance, one count of international money laundering, and one count of possession with intent to distribute controlled substances.

Evidence at trial and sentencing showed that, beginning in at least January 2022, and continuing until December 20, 2023, Butler traveled to Mexico on several occasions to acquire fentanyl pills and fentanyl powder. In total, Butler obtained over 10,000 fentanyl pills and a significant quantity of fentanyl powder from his source of supply in Mexico, which Butler smuggled into the United States and brought to the Waterloo area. During that time, Butler possessed firearms, and he made credible threats of violence towards others, including threatening to kill his son over a drug-related dispute. Butler also directed the drug-related activities of multiple individuals, including his girlfriend.

On March 14, 2023, Butler’s friend asked Butler for additional fentanyl pills, and Butler directed the friend to Butler’s residence to obtain the pills as Butler was out of town. Butler’s friend told Butler that he just kept “popping” the fentanyl pills, and Butler warned the friend that the pills were dangerous. The next day, Butler’s friend was found dead from a fentanyl-related overdose, which was caused by the fentanyl pills that Butler’s friend acquired from Butler.

On May 9, 2023, law enforcement officers conducted a traffic stop on Butler as Butler had an active warrant for his arrest. During the traffic stop, officers searched Butler's vehicle and seized a backpack that contained almost \$60,000.

On December 20, 2023, law enforcement officers searched Butler's residence and another residence that Butler utilized as a "stash" house. Officer seized over 40 grams of fentanyl powder, a fentanyl pill, and a firearm. Around the time of the searches, officers intercepted phone calls made by Butler to others, including his girlfriend and his sister. During those calls, Butler stated that he was "going to jail," expressed regret that he didn't stop selling fentanyl earlier, and discussed fleeing to either Mexico or Belize to avoid prosecution. Butler was arrested by law enforcement in the Southern District of Texas on December 21, 2023.

Butler was sentenced in Cedar Rapids by United States District Court Chief Judge C.J. Williams. Butler was sentenced to 444 months' imprisonment, and he must also serve a five-year term of supervised release after the prison term. There is no parole in the federal system.

Butler is being held in the United States Marshal's custody until he can be transported to a federal prison.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Dillan Edwards and Special Assistant United States Attorney Michael Hudson, and it was investigated as part of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) program of the United States Department of Justice through a cooperative effort of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force consisting of the Waterloo Police Department, Cedar Falls Police Department, Black Hawk County Sheriff's Department, Evansdale Police Department, Waverly Police Department, Hudson Police Department, La Porte City Police Department, and the Bremer County Sheriff's Department; the Iowa Division of Narcotics Enforcement; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the United States Postal Inspection Service; and Homeland Security Investigations.

Court file information at <https://ecf.iand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>. The case file number is 23-CR-02078-CJW.

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