

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Man Facing \$500,000 Fine, 37 Years In Prison For Possessing Firearm And Ammunition

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ST. CROIX -- Curtis Winston Venner, 34, of St. Croix, was arrested today on a criminal complaint charging him with possession of a firearm by convicted felon, possession of ammunition by a convicted felon, unauthorized possession of a firearm, and unauthorized possession of ammunition, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced today. Venner made his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge George Cannon in District Court and was ordered detained pending a hearing scheduled for November 23, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

According to the complaint, Venner was the driver and sole occupant of a vehicle that was stopped on Rattan Road on July 12, 2015. Inside the vehicle, next to Venner on the

floor of the front passenger seat, law enforcement found a bag containing a Cobray, model M 12, .380 caliber handgun and a magazine containing 17 bullets.

If convicted of possessing a firearm and/or ammunition by a convicted felon, Venner faces a maximum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment and a \$250,000.00 fine for each count. If convicted of unauthorized possession of a firearm, Venner faces a mandatory minimum sentence of one year imprisonment and a maximum of five years. If convicted of unauthorized possession of ammunition, Venner faces a maximum sentence of seven years' imprisonment.

The complaint is the result of investigative work conducted by the Virgin Islands Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rami. S. Badawy. United States Attorney Sharpe reminds the public that a complaint is merely a formal charging document and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless found guilty.