

55 yrs 1 Day for Pot

Written by Westside ID453

Tuesday, 23 November 2004 22:15 -

U.S. District Judge Paul Cassell gave record producer Weldon Angelos the minimum 55 years for carrying the gun -- and one day for dealing marijuana and money laundering while in possession of the weapon. Angelos is the founder of Extravagant Records, which counts rapper Snoop Dogg among its clients, twice sold \$350 worth of pot to a Utah police informant.

Cassell said Angelos, 25, will serve more time than rapists, murderers or airline hijackers -- and won't be eligible for release until he's 70.

"I'm disappointed the judge didn't go the extra step" of ignoring the sentencing guidelines, said Angelos' attorney, Jerry Mooney, who plans an appeal.

Cassell said he would call on President Bush to commute Angelos's sentence and Congress to change sentencing laws for drug offenders.

Before trial Angelos was offered a plea bargain with a 16-year sentence, but he strongly denied carrying a gun outside his home during alleged drug transactions. That testimony came from an informant "of some disreputable background," Mooney said.

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A jury exonerated Angelos of two other gun charges but convicted him of twice wearing a gun in an ankle holster and once carrying it in a briefcase.

Prosecutor Robert Lunt said Angelos has been suspected of drug trafficking and money laundering for years and got what he deserved.

Last year's trial made news when the witness list included rapper Snoop Dogg and other rap hip-hop artists who had worked with Angelos, but Bad Azz was the only big name artist who ended up testifying, according to the AP.

The defense argued Angelos made money legally through his work, while prosecutors claimed he used drug money to finance his music business, Extravagant Records.