

To the Editor:

I read with interest your editorial of March 15, 2007 entitled "Small-time Stuff" regarding Andrew Cree's conviction for selling marijuana in a school zone. I also read with interest your editorial last year criticizing the pre-conviction seizure of more than \$20,000 from Carlisle drug dealer Sylvester "Tiger" Anderson. I made the decision to proceed in both cases.

Cree's arrest in September of 2006 was his fifth arrest in less than three years on charges including retail theft, unauthorized use of automobiles, possession of drug paraphernalia and underage drinking. He sold marijuana to an undercover detective on two occasions. A search warrant on his residence uncovered additional marijuana, scales, "owe" sheets and \$600 including \$120 in official funds - that is, the money we paid him for the drugs. Cree's residence shares the 100 block of South 24th street in Camp Hill with the High/Middle School. Based on those facts, I chose to seek a mandatory sentence. Any suggestion in your editorial that my hands were tied is misplaced. As is the suggestion that dealing any amount of illegal drugs is nonviolent activity. You may recall that the murder of Sidney Bull, a Shippensburg University student, was directly related to "low level" marijuana dealing. In my mind, one brush with the law, even at the felony level, may merit leniency. Five brushes in three years capped off by multiple felonies merits state prison.

Tiger Anderson was repeatedly arrested and released on bail for selling small amounts of crack cocaine in the Borough of Carlisle. I personally observed video surveillance of Anderson dealing crack. He was federally indicted and is serving a lengthy federal prison sentence. At the time of his final arrest, my office seized in excess of \$20,000 from his bank account pursuant to long standing Pennsylvania law. Prior to his conviction, Anderson moved to have the money returned. We prevailed all the way to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and are using the money to investigate drug crimes and imprison drug dealers. In both of these cases, the decisions to proceed were mine and I stand by them proudly.

David Freed
Cumberland County District Attorney
March 16, 2007