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PRESS RELEASE

Edwardsville—Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons is hoping to get the word out to driver's who continue to drive without licenses that they will be punished and sent to prison.

State's Attorney Gibbons recently prosecuted a case where the defendant, Larry Cox, had eight previous convictions for Driving While License Revoked. In his most recent case, he was charged with another Driving While License Revoked and a DUI, both Class 4 felonies, after a one-car accident on Christmas morning, 2010.

Cox, a resident of Madison, Illinois, pled guilty by open plea to the charge. At his sentencing on May 16, 2012, Gibbons argued that a maximum sentence was needed because of harm caused by the defendant, his extensive criminal record and the need for a harsh sentence to deter others for committing the same crime. The defendant was sentenced by Judge Kyle Napp to three years in prison on both counts, the maximum amount allowed for a Class 4 felony.

“Some people may not think that driving without your license isn't a serious enough offense to go to prison. When you have such a flagrant disregard for the law as Mr. Cox has, it's a more than appropriate sentence,” stated Gibbons. “As State's Attorney, I have an obligation to protect the public from repeat offenders and the only way to do this was to take him off the streets.” Gibbons added that it was only by luck that Cox didn't hit another vehicle or person when he ran through a stop sign and crashed his vehicle.

If Cox is caught driving again without his license he will face the same charge, however, after nine convictions, he will be facing a Class 3 felony. The maximum penalty for that will be five years in prison. Gibbons is hopeful that Cox will learn his lesson, however, if he doesn't, he will again seek the maximum allowable penalty. “Repeat offenders must fear punishment, otherwise they'll continue to break the law,” said Gibbons.

Cox is currently serving his prison sentence at Graham Correctional Center in Hillsboro, Illinois.

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