

# **New Bedford Heroin Trafficker Convicted at Trial; Sentenced to Prison**

Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn announced today that a 46-year-old New Bedford heroin trafficker was convicted after trial in Fall River Superior Court and sentenced to serve five to six years in state prison.

After around three hours of deliberations, a superior court jury yesterday afternoon convicted Benvindo Rocha of trafficking in excess of 18 grams of heroin.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Aaron Strojny.

On May 16, 2015, New Bedford Police detectives observed Mr. Rocha, who had an open default warrant lodged against him, leave his 1387 Pleasant Street apartment and get into a taxi. Police stopped the taxi a short time later and took the defendant into custody. In the meantime, police asked the driver for permission to search the vehicle, which he granted.

Police found a black pouch behind the third row of seats in the taxi, containing about 28 grams of heroin and smaller amounts of Suboxone.

During a sentencing hearing before Judge E. Susan Garsh, Assistant District Attorney Strojny argued for a six to 10 year state prison sentence, due to the defendant's lengthy criminal record of drug distribution. The defendant requested a three to four year state prison sentence.

"I want to thank the jury for their time devoted to this case. The verdict was well supported by the evidence. This defendant has a long criminal record, and his drug dealing contributed

to the ongoing heroin problem in the city," District Attorney Quinn said. "This state prison sentence will prevent him from continuing his drug dealing in New Bedford for a long period of time."