

# Press Release

## DEA ANNOUNCES GUILTY PLEA OF U.S. CONGRESSMAN ON COCAINE CHARGES

**WASHINGTON – DEA and other federal officials today announced that U.S. Rep. Trey Radel, 37, pled guilty today in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia to a misdemeanor charge of possession of cocaine.**

Radel, who represents the 19th Congressional District of Florida, appeared before the Honorable Senior Judge Robert S. Tignor. As a first-time offender, Radel was able to ask the Court, under District of Columbia law, to defer entering a judgment of guilty and place him on probation. Judge Tignor placed Radel on one year of probation. If the probation is successfully completed, the Court could then dismiss the case without an adjudication of guilt.

According to a statement of offense submitted as part of the plea, Radel came to the attention of the FBI and DEA in the fall of 2013, during an investigation into cocaine trafficking in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Agents learned that Radel would purchase cocaine for his personal use and sometimes share it with others.

The statement of offense says that, on Oct. 29, 2013, Radel met with an undercover police officer at a restaurant in the Dupont Circle area of Washington, D.C. At this time, Radel agreed to buy about 3.5 grams of cocaine from the undercover officer. He and the undercover officer went outside, and Radel handed over \$260. The undercover officer provided Radel with a package of cocaine. Federal agents then approached Radel and the cocaine was recovered.

Radel agreed to speak with the agents about what had taken place and invited them to his apartment. There, he voluntarily admitted that he had purchased the cocaine. He also retrieved and provided to the agents a vial of cocaine that he had in his apartment.

“Drug traffickers and abusers respect no boundaries or limits and our neighborhoods and communities often pay the price,” said DEA Special Agent in Charge Karl Colder. “DEA and our law enforcement partners will continue to relentlessly pursue these drug trafficking networks and their criminal associates at every level. They pose a direct threat to the safety and security of our community here in the D.C. metro area. We want young people to see the price people pay for drug abuse and trafficking in cases like this so they will resolve to live drug-free lives.”

“Today’s guilty plea emerges from a broader narcotics investigation that brought to light information that a sitting Member of Congress was routinely using and buying cocaine. Once this information was confirmed, law enforcement could not ignore this illegal conduct,” said U.S. Attorney Ronald Machen. “Mr. Radel’s guilty plea is similar to those entered every year by hundreds of other drug offenders in the District of Columbia who possess illegal narcotics. We appreciate his willingness to promptly accept responsibility for his conduct.”

“Today’s announcement demonstrates that illegal drugs continue to be present in our communities, and do not discriminate by age, gender, socio-economic group or profession,” said FBI Assistant Director in Charge Valerie Parlave. “Along with our law enforcement partners at the DEA, the FBI remains focused on stopping the movement and sale of drugs on our neighborhood streets.”

In announcing the plea, U.S. Attorney Machen, Assistant Director in Charge Parlave, and Special Agent in Charge Colder commended the work of those who investigated the case. They also expressed appreciation for the work of the Fairfax County, Va., Police Department and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Virginia. Finally, they commended those who handled the case from the U.S. Attorney’s Office, including Assistant U.S. Attorney Nihar R. Mohanty, who is prosecuting the matter.

