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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DUVAL COUNTY JURY FINDS LUKONDE GUILTY OF TRAFFICKING DRUGS

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that a Duval County jury found Patient Lukonde guilty of Trafficking in Substituted Cathinone. With the verdict and Lukonde's classification as a Habitual Felony Offender, Lukonde faces up to life in Florida State Prison. The Honorable Mark Borello will sentence Lukonde at a later date.

On Feb. 2, 2024, officers with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office were monitoring for trespassing at a grocery store on Myrtle Avenue. There are multiple signs around the building stating "No Trespassing". The officer saw four people near the electrical box by the adjacent dumpster. The officers approached and arrested another individual for a narcotics charge. While placing that suspect in handcuffs, Lukonde was nervous, shaking, and hypervigilant. Lukonde took off his jacket and threw it on the ground, claiming he was getting hot. Ultimately the search of his jacket revealed a bag with a rocklike substance in his jacket pocket, which was determined to be substituted cathinone, commonly known as bath salts. The officers took Lukonde into custody.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Crystal Ganpath-Freed and Luke Dill.