

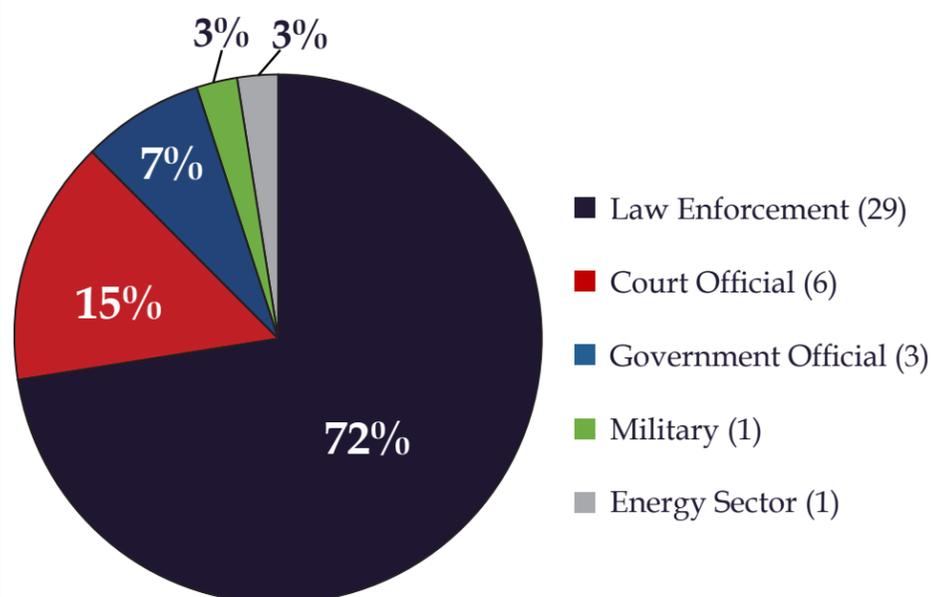


SOVEREIGN CITIZEN EXTREMISTS

Background

- Sovereign citizens throughout the United States view federal, state, and local governments as illegitimate, lacking the authority to issue or enforce laws. They also assert that they are not subject to questioning or arrest by law enforcement, paying taxes and fines, complying with summonses, or possessing official licenses.
- Sovereign citizen extremists have engaged in counterfeiting, verbal and written harassment, unlawful property occupation scams, and financial fraud.
- In 2015, sovereign citizen extremists conducted multiple attacks and one plot. In September 2015, Thomas Deegan was arrested for plotting to overthrow West Virginia's government by targeting the state capitol, the National Guard, and law enforcement officials. In July 2015, Dustin Gunnells attempted to shoot a sheriff's deputy at a traffic stop in Georgia, and in February 2015, Joseph Paffen was killed after shooting at police officers in Florida.

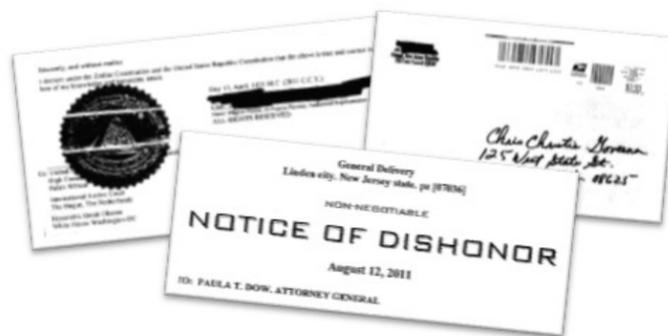
Targets of Sovereign Citizen Extremist Attacks in the US, 2010-15



Threat to New Jersey: Moderate

Sovereign citizen extremists in New Jersey mostly engage in nonviolent activities, such as self-identifying in court paperwork and traffic-stop encounters, and filing liens against law enforcement and public officials.

- In 2015, sovereign citizen extremists threatened to file liens against public officials, and in one case, successfully filed a fraudulent lien of \$7.8 million against the Monmouth County Sheriff, the Monmouth County Clerk, a Superior Court judge, and others.
- In 2014, Wisconsin-based sovereign citizen extremist Michael Rinderle was sentenced in New Jersey to five years in prison for filing fraudulent liens totaling \$42 million in silver coins against a Voorhees Township municipal judge and 27 other public officials in Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties. This was the first time a sovereign citizen extremist was prosecuted in New Jersey for using this tactic.
- In May, legislation in New Jersey enhanced the penalties on sovereign citizen extremists filing fraudulent financial documents or liens as a retaliatory tactic against public officials.



Paperwork submitted by a sovereign citizen extremist

Intelligence Gaps

- What motivating factors would encourage sovereign citizens in New Jersey to adopt more violent tactics?
- How are sovereign citizen extremists using the Internet to recruit in New Jersey?

New Jersey Nexus

- The National Liberty Alliance (NLA), a sovereign citizen group claiming approximately 20 members in New Jersey, focuses on creating "common law grand juries," asserting the authority to conduct investigations, issue indictments, and remove public officials from office. NLA has publicly encouraged members to intimidate government officials by engaging in criminal activity.



- New Jersey has an active community of Moorish sovereign citizens – including a man claiming to be the Crown Prince Emperor El Bey Bigbay Bagby, who was charged in 2014 for using fake diplomatic tags and driving without a license.
- Moorish sovereign citizen extremists in New Jersey are generally opportunistic, creating and selling fraudulent identification, squatting in abandoned houses, and filing false liens against public officials as a form of harassment.

Contact Information

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