

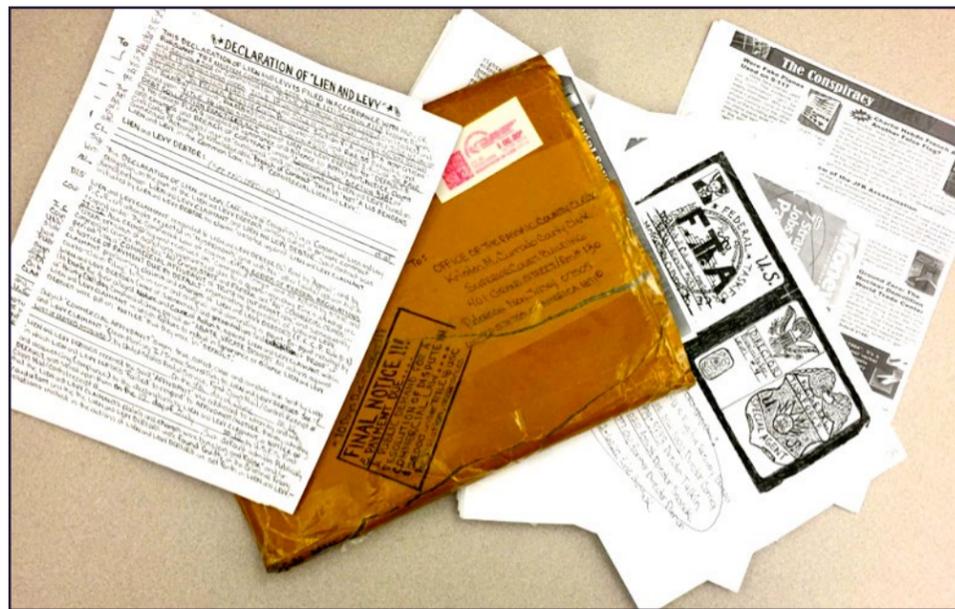


SOVEREIGN CITIZEN EXTREMISTS



Background

- Sovereign citizen extremists throughout the United States view federal, state, and local governments as illegitimate. They also assert they are not subject to questioning or arrest by law enforcement, paying taxes or 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.
- The Moorish Nation, a sovereign citizen extremist group that splintered from the black nationalist movement, asserts that it is the original inhabitant of the United States and is entitled to self-governing status, giving its members rights that predate the Constitution.
- In 2018, sovereign citizen extremists accounted for three of the six ideologically motivated attacks against law enforcement nationwide. Two incidents occurred during routine policing activities and did not demonstrate indicators of preplanning; the third attack was the result of booby traps set in anticipation of visits from law enforcement.



Examples of sovereign citizen "paper terrorism"

Threat to New Jersey: Moderate

Sovereign citizen extremists in New Jersey often rely on "paper terrorism," such as filing fraudulent liens against public officials or self-identifying in court paperwork, but can resort to violence when challenged by law enforcement. In May 2016, legislation in New Jersey enhanced penalties associated with the filing of fraudulent liens to retaliate against public officials. Sovereign citizens have since adopted new methods to circumvent the law.

- In May, NJOHSP detectives arrested Courtney Alexander of Irvington (Essex County) for filing fraudulent liens in the first instance of an individual being indicted under the legislation passed in 2016. Alexander filed the liens totaling more than \$1.5 million against two Irvington police officers, a municipal prosecutor, and a municipal judge in retaliation for traffic tickets he had received.



Courtney Alexander

- Police in Roselle Park (Union County) arrested Wayne Hall, a self-proclaimed sovereign citizen, in March 2017 after officers asked Hall to provide his information. Hall instead gave the officer a card that asserted he was not subject to traffic laws, resulting in an altercation. Authorities also arrested Hall's friend, Jameika Hutchison, after she engaged in a physical altercation with police.



Wayne Hall



Jameika Hutchison

- In June 2016, authorities arrested Erick Shute, a former New Jersey resident who declared himself a sovereign citizen, for killing three individuals in West Virginia over a property dispute. In 2011, Shute spent nearly 200 days in a county jail in New Jersey for aggravated assault, resisting arrest, and obstruction after a violent confrontation that began when he asked a police officer to "sign a peace treaty" to allow him to drive without a license.

US Nexus

Throughout the United States, sovereign citizen extremists have engaged in violence with law enforcement, resulting in the death or serious injury of several officers.

- Gregory Rodvelt, a sovereign citizen, set booby traps throughout his Oregon property in September, injuring an FBI agent. While searching the property, the agent activated a trap connected to a pre-positioned shotgun that discharged, shooting the agent in the leg. In April, authorities arrested Rodvelt in Arizona after he reportedly brandished a handgun. He initially refused to cooperate with police, leading to a three-hour standoff.
- In June, Matthew Wright used an armored vehicle to block traffic on a bridge near the Hoover Dam in Nevada. Following his arrest, police found weapons, ammunition, and explosives in the vehicle. Wright used sovereign citizen rhetoric in letters mailed to several federal agencies, including the FBI and CIA.
- In May, David Wolosin opened fire on two police officers, critically injuring one, after they responded to a complaint of a man teaching his 3-year-old child how to drive. Wolosin, a self-identified sovereign citizen, was killed in the shootout.
- Tierre Guthrie, a Moorish sovereign citizen, shot three police officers, killing one, while being served a warrant for his arrest in February 2018. Guthrie was killed in the shootout, and his friends and family reported he had espoused anti-government ideas in the weeks preceding the shooting.

Additional Resources

[2019 Terrorism Threat Assessment](#)

[Overlap Between Black Separatists and Moorish Sovereign Citizen Extremists](#)

[Domestic Terrorism - A Changing Environment](#)