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NJOHSP

OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND PREPAREDNESS

Sovereign Citizen Extremist Arrested After Fraudulent Liens Filed Against Public Officials

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TRENTON– Director Jared Maples, of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP), along with Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal, announced that an Essex County man has been arrested for allegedly submitting two Uniform Commercial Code filings, which placed liens on the properties of four public officials in Irvington, N.J., totaling over \$1.5 million.

Courtney Alexander, 39, of Irvington was arrested Wednesday, May 23, in Irvington by NJOHSP detectives after having been indicted on two counts of second-degree fraudulent filings and one count of third-degree retaliation against a witness. Alexander was held in Essex County pending a detention hearing.

“The safety and security of New Jersey’s residents is paramount to the men and women of our law enforcement agencies,” **said Director Jared Maples** of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness. “Under no circumstances can we permit individuals, including sovereign citizen extremists, to engage in harassing tactics such as filing false liens. We will continue to prosecute those that seek to disrupt public servants from carrying out their sworn duties on behalf of the State of New Jersey.

“Police, prosecutors and judges must be able to perform their vital duties without fear that they will face retaliation or harassment from defendants,” **said Attorney General Grewal**. “As the allegations in this case illustrate, offenders can cause serious financial disruption or damage by filing fraudulent liens against the property of public servants. This new law we have invoked ensures that such conduct can be met with stiff criminal penalties.”

In April 2016, NJOHSP became aware of filings allegedly made by Alexander against four public officials in Irvington, including police officers, a municipal court judge, and a municipal court prosecutor. An investigation was opened by NJOHSP. The investigation revealed that Alexander was issued traffic tickets by two Irvington police officers in July 2015. Following the issuance of the traffic tickets, Alexander appeared in court before a prosecutor and a judge, both of Irvington. Following Alexander’s interaction with the officers, the judge, and the prosecutor in their official capacities as public servants, Alexander allegedly filed liens in retaliation for their official actions. The investigation also revealed that Alexander identifies as a sovereign citizen extremist.

This is the first case to be indicted and charged in the State of New Jersey under a statute enacted in May 2015, which makes such fraudulent filings a crime of the second degree.

Second-degree crimes carry a sentence of five to 10 years in state prison and a fine of up to \$150,000, while third-degree crimes carry a sentence of three to five years in state prison and a fine of up to \$15,000. The indictment charging Alexander is merely an accusation, and he is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP), a Cabinet-level agency, was created in 2006. The Director serves as the Governor's Homeland Security Advisor, and is responsible for leading and coordinating the State's counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness efforts while building resiliency throughout the State across all levels of government and the private sector. NJOHSP oversees and distributes discretionary State and federal homeland security and emergency preparedness funds on behalf of New Jersey. More information about NJOHSP can be found at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov