

Department of Justice

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WAYNE COUNTY MAN INDICTED BY FEDERAL GRAND JURY FOR SELLING COUNTERFEIT MERCHANDISE ONLINE

BUFFALO, N.Y.- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr., announced today that Ryan Breen, 31, of Savannah, New York, was indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of trafficking in counterfeit goods involving the sale of unauthorized merchandise from the popular FX Network Television series "Sons of Anarchy." The charges carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$2,000,000 fine.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Fauzia K Mattingly, who is handling the case, Breen was identified as the owner and operator of the website "ventma.com" which offered for sale over the Internet counterfeit t-shirts and goods using the Sons of Anarchy trademark without the permission of the Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, the producer and exclusive owner of the Sons of Anarchy TV series. The defendant's website was seized by federal agents in July as part of a nationwide crackdown aimed at combating intellectual property theft. According to the Indictment, the government is seeking nearly \$30,000 in forfeiture from Breen.

Earlier this week, United States Attorney General Eric Holder announced a public education campaign directed at preventing online counterfeit goods trafficking. "As our country continues to recover from once-in-a-generation economic challenges, the need to safeguard intellectual property rights - and to protect Americans from intellectual property crimes - has never been more urgent," said Attorney General Holder.

"Protecting a company or individual's ideas - or what the law calls intellectual property - is more important than ever in this economic climate," said U.S. Attorney Hochul. "Our Office, along with our federal law enforcement partners, pledges to use all of the tools at our disposal to do so."

The indictment is the result of an investigation by Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Special Agent-in-Charge James C. Spero.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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