



Department of Justice

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FLORIDA MAN ORDERED DETAINED PENDING TRIAL ON CHARGE THAT HE SENT HUNDREDS OF THREATENING EMAILS

COLUMBUS – A U.S. Magistrate Judge here has ordered Kyle Jeffrey Tschiegg, age 38 of Sarasota, held without bond pending trial. Tschiegg is charged with sending hundreds of threatening emails and text messages to victims in Ohio, Kansas and Florida since October, 2007.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, and Keith L. Bennett, Special Agent in Charge (SAC) of the Cincinnati Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced the order handed down by U.S. Magistrate Judge Nora McCann King.

FBI agents arrested Tschiegg on February 12 at his father's home in Sarasota, where he also works. No trial date has been set.

The federal complaint alleges that Tschiegg has sent more than 180 email messages to as many as 3,500 people and made more than 30 threatening telephone calls to victims in Columbus, Florida and Kansas. Among those allegedly threatened by Tschiegg is a Florida state senator. The complaint alleges that Tschiegg holds himself out as a "computer and network security professional." Tschiegg is further alleged to have used vulnerabilities in email servers to reflect emails through those servers to appear as if the email originated from the server. He is also alleged to have seized control of email accounts of others. Finally he is alleged to have made threats by creating Yahoo! groups, establishing himself as the moderator of those groups, entered victim email addresses into the group and then sending a single threatening email, appearing to originate from a victim's email server, to all members of the group.

Among the threats Tschiegg is alleged to have made are the following: a threat to come to a Columbus company and "start shooting the whole place up;" and an email to an account in which he claimed a friend of the account holder had been killed, and threatening to destroy the victim's computer if the victim did not send at least \$3,000 to an address.

Lockhart commended the investigation by FBI agents and investigators in the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorney Deborah A. Solove and Department of Justice Attorney Joseph Springsteen of the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section, who are prosecuting the case. Lockhart also acknowledged the assistance of Assistant U.S. Attorney Laurel Moore in the Middle District of Florida.

The complaint charges Tschiegg with one count of Interstate Transmission of Threatening Communications. It is punishable by up to five years imprisonment

A criminal complaint is only an allegation. A defendant should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

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