



Department of Justice

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MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO EMAILING THREATS TO A COLUMBUS COMPANY, FLORIDA LEGISLATOR

COLUMBUS – Kyle Jeffrey Tschiegg, 39, of Sarasota, Florida pleaded guilty in United States District Court here today to one count each of interstate transmission of threatening communications, interstate extortion, computer intrusion, and identity theft for threats he emailed to companies in Ohio, Florida and Kansas and to a Florida legislator.

William E. Hunt, Acting 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 plea entered today before Senior United States District Court Judge James L. Graham.

In a statement of facts presented in court, Tschiegg admitted that he sent an email to a Columbus company and two company employees on August 4, 2008 threatening to “start shooting the whole place up, blowing your heads off...” Tschiegg admitted that he used his laptop computer to access the Internet through a neighbor’s unsecured, wireless network in Sarasota, Florida to send the email.

Tschiegg also admitted to accessing a Florida state legislator’s email account in October 2008. He used personal information he found about the legislator on the Internet to reset the legislator’s password. Less than two weeks before the November 4, 2008 election, Tschiegg sent two emails threatening to injure the legislator, her family and supporters unless she withdrew from the race.

FBI agents arrested Tschiegg at his Sarasota home on February 12, 2009.

Interstate extortion is punishable by up to 20 years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000. Each of the other crimes is punishable by up to five years imprisonment and fines of up to \$250,000.

Hunt 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. Hunt also acknowledged the assistance of Assistant U.S. Attorney Laurel Moore in the Middle District of Florida.

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