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DOLTON POLICE OFFICER ARRESTED ON FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS AND OBSTRUCTION CHARGES INVOLVING ALLEGED USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE

CHICAGO — A south suburban Dolton police officer was arrested today on federal civil rights and obstruction of justice charges alleging that he used excessive force against two victims in 2009 and later threatened Dolton's then police chief during the investigation, federal law enforcement officials announced today. The defendant, **Kevin Fletcher**, was indicted on two counts of violating the victims' civil right to be free from the use of unreasonable force by a person acting under color of law and one count of obstruction of justice. The indictment was returned by a federal grand jury last Thursday and unsealed today after Fletcher was arrested. The arrest and indictment were announced today by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division; and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Fletcher, 34, of South Holland, joined the Dolton Police Department in October 2006. He was released on a \$15,000 secured bond after pleading not guilty at his arraignment this afternoon before U.S. Magistrate Judge Maria Valdez in Federal Court in Chicago. A status hearing was scheduled for Nov. 28 before U.S. District Judge Elaine Bucklo.

The indictment alleges that on May 17, 2009, while performing his duties as a police officer, Fletcher used an asp baton as a dangerous weapon to strike two unnamed victims, identified only as “Victim M” and “Victim W,” in the head, resulting in each victim suffering bodily injury.

The obstruction count alleges that on Feb. 15, 2010, Fletcher threatened to cause bodily injury to Dolton’s then police chief in retaliation for producing records and documents to the federal grand jury investigating Fletcher’s alleged use of excessive force, as well as for providing information to FBI agents conducting the investigation.

The Government is being represented in court by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tinos Diamantatos and DOJ Trial Attorney Sanjay Patel.

The civil rights counts each carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, and the obstruction count carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. If convicted, the Court must impose an reasonable sentence under federal sentencing statutes and the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The public is reminded that an indictment contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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