



Department of Justice

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**FORMER MANAGING PARTNER OF VENTURE CAPITAL FIRM SENTENCED TO
15 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR ATTEMPTED EXTORTION OF THE FORMER
GENERAL COUNSEL TO THE NEW YORK STATE COMPTROLLER**

ALBANY, N.Y.— Giridhar C. Sekhar, 41, was sentenced today to 15 months in prison by Senior United States District Judge Thomas J. McAvoy for attempted extortion and the interstate transmission of extortionate threats, announced United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian and Special-Agent-in-Charge Clifford C. Holly of the Albany Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Sekhar, who was also ordered to pay a \$600 special assessment, began serving his sentence immediately.

Following a trial, Sekhar was convicted of one count of Attempted Extortion, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1951(a), and five counts of Interstate Transmission of an Extortionate Threat, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 875(d). He was acquitted of one count of Interstate Transmission of an Extortionate Threat.

From November 17, 2009 through December 1, 2009, Sekhar, then a managing partner of the venture capital and private equity company FA Technology Ventures Corporation ("FA Technology"), sent six extortionate electronic mail messages to the General Counsel for the Office of the New York State Comptroller. Sekhar threatened to reveal an alleged extramarital affair unless the General Counsel recommended that the New York State Comptroller, the sole trustee and manager of the New York State Common Retirement Fund, commit to a proposed \$35 million investment of New York State Common Retirement Fund assets in funds managed by FA Technology (the "Commitment"). If FA Technology had received the proposed \$35 million investment, then it would have received more than \$8 million in fees.

Sekhar sent the messages after learning that the Commitment would not be approved and that the General Counsel had recommended that it not be approved. By threatening to disclose the alleged extramarital affair, Sekhar attempted to obtain, with the General Counsel's consent, the General Counsel's recommendation to approve the Commitment. The electronic mail messages traveled from and through Jersey City, New Jersey and Brookline, Massachusetts to Albany, New York.

The case was originated by the Albany County District Attorney's Office with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Albany Office, and the Brookline, Massachusetts Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Elizabeth C. Coombe of the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of New York.