

Department of Justice

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JURY SAYS CONVICTED NEW YORK CITY POLICE OFFICER MUST FORFEIT VEHICLE USED IN CRIME

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that a federal jury has ruled that Richard Lee, 31, of Queens, N.Y., who was found guilty of smuggling, must forfeit property involved in the crime. The forfeiture verdict comes a day after the same jury found the defendant guilty of smuggling.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Fauzia K. Mattingly and Maura K. O'Donnell, who handled the prosecution of the case, stated that on February 22, 2010, the defendant, a New York City Police Officer, attempted to enter the United States from Canada at the Rainbow Bridge. Lee was driving a 1997 Honda Civic with license plates issued to a company, Pro Auto Sales, run by the defendant and his father. During a secondary inspection of the car, the defendant claimed to be the owner of the vehicle but a record check determined that the vehicle was registered to a Canadian resident. The vehicle was seized by the Government at the time of Lee's arrest.

Lee will be sentenced May 29, 2012 at 12:30 a.m. before U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara. The defendant faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison, a fine of \$250,000, or both.

The forfeiture is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge James C. Spero.

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