

Department of Justice

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CONVICTED NYC POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED FOR SMUGGLING

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Richard Lee, 32, of Queens, N.Y., who was convicted of smuggling following a jury trial in February 2012, was sentenced to two years probation by U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Fauzia K. Mattingly, who handled the prosecution of the case, stated that on February 22, 2010, the defendant, a New York City Police Officer at the time, 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 by Customs and Border Protection Officers, 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 same jury that found the defendant guilty of smuggling also determined in a second proceeding that Lee must forfeit the vehicle to the U.S. Government.

Lee has since been terminated by the NYPD.

The conviction is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge James C. Spero.

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