



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: MAY 30, 2018
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Corbin Man Sentenced to 360 Months for Devising Murder-for-Hire Scheme

LONDON, Ky. — William Timothy Sutton, 55, of Corbin, Ky., was sentenced today to 360 months in federal prison, by United States District Court Judge Gregory VanTatenhove, on four counts of interstate murder-for-hire and one count of possession of firearms by a convicted felon.

Sutton was found guilty by a federal jury in January of this year. The evidence at trial established that, in March of 2017, while incarcerated in the Whitley County Detention Center, Sutton offered to pay a fellow inmate to murder the Whitley County Attorney, the Whitley/McCreary County Commonwealth's Attorney, and two ex-girlfriends. The evidence further established that Sutton mailed a letter to a relative from jail, asking the relative to provide the would-be hitman with one of Sutton's own firearms to further the scheme. Law enforcement became aware of the plan, interceded, and ultimately arrested Sutton.

"The sentence imposed illustrates the seriousness of the offense," said Robert M. Duncan, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "Through his abhorrent actions, the defendant victimized four people and attempted to undermine the sanctity of the judicial process and the rule of law." "Protecting the public from violence and ensuring the integrity of our system of justice are core principles of the Department of Justice and central priorities of our Office. In our efforts to make our community safer, we will continue to confront and prosecute criminal conduct that undermines these principles."

"I want to commend the work of our valued law enforcement partners, whose efforts made this prosecution possible. Their work on this investigation thwarted a significant threat to the victims' safety and to the integrity of our judicial system."

"ATF is committed to working with our law enforcement partners to protect citizens from those who threaten public safety through violent criminal behavior," stated Stuart L. Lowrey, Special Agent In-charge, ATF Louisville Division. Defendant Sutton is a convicted felon who illegally possessed a firearm and threatened the lives of public servants committed to keeping our communities safe. We support today's lengthy sentence as a deterrent to this criminal behavior."

Under federal law, Sutton must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence; and upon his release, he will be under the supervision of the United States Probation Office for three years.

United States Attorney Duncan; Stuart L. Lowrey, Special Agent In-Charge, ATF; and Commissioner Rick Sanders of the Kentucky State Police, jointly announced the sentence.

The ATF, the Kentucky State Police, and the Whitley County Detention Center conducted the investigation. Assistant United States Attorney W. Samuel Dotson represented the United States.

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. Attorney General Sessions reinvigorated PSN in 2017, as part of the Department's renewed focus on targeting violent criminals, directing all U.S. Attorney's Offices to work in partnership with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and the local community to develop effective, local strategies to reduce violent crime.

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