

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
402 East State Street, Room 430
Trenton, New Jersey 08608



Ralph J. Marra, Jr., Acting U.S. Attorney

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Assistant U.S. Attorney
RONALD CHILLEMI
973-645-6546

kilk0819.rel
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Maryland Man Pleads Guilty to Attempting to Extort \$3 Million
From the Showboat Atlantic City Casino/hotel

(More)

Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

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TRENTON – A Maryland man pleaded guilty today to a three-count federal Indictment that charges him with attempting to extort \$3 million from the Showboat Atlantic City Casino/Hotel, admitting that he boarded a shuttle bus and took several showboat patrons hostage, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr., announced.

David Kilkeary, 39, of Crofton, Md., pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Trenton before Judge Peter G. Sheridan to a three-count Indictment that charges him with making threats, kidnapping and extortion. Judge Sheridan continued the defendant's detention pending sentencing, which is scheduled for Oct. 19. Kilkeary has been held without bail since his arrest on Nov. 13, 2007, by police officers with the Atlantic City Police Department.

At his plea hearing, Kilkeary admitted that on Nov. 13, he traveled from Crofton, Md., to Atlantic City with the intention of executing his scheme to extorting \$3 million from the Showboat Atlantic City Casino/Hotel ("Showboat"). Kilkeary admitted that he brought with him a wig and ski mask, a bb handgun, hoax bombs, a Molotov cocktail, and scuba equipment to perpetrate the extortion or to assist in his escape from law enforcement.

Kilkeary admitted that once he arrived in Atlantic City, he first placed a hoax bomb in a Showboat men's room and then proceeded to board a Showboat shuttle bus wearing the wig and carrying the afore-mentioned items in large luggage bags. When the shuttle bus driver attempted to prevent Kilkeary from entering the shuttle bus with the bags, Kilkeary told the driver that he had a bomb and pointed the gun at the driver, he admitted. Kilkeary admitted that he and the driver then engaged in a physical struggle, during which the driver fell to the street outside the shuttle bus, escaping from Kilkeary.

Kilkeary admitted he then took hostage four Showboat patrons, who were on the shuttle bus, and prevented them from leaving the shuttle bus. Kilkeary then attempted to drive the shuttle bus away from the casino, with the hostages on it, but was unable to. He then pointed the gun at two of the hostages and threaten to shoot each of them if they tried to escape.

Kilkeary admitted that he then put on the ski mask and sunglasses, displayed packages wrapped in foil on his chest and a small hand-held device, and informed the hostages that the packages and the hand-held device were a bomb and a detonator. Kilkeary then released one of the hostages with instructions that she inform police officers, who had responded to the scene, that he had taken control of the bus.

Kilkeary admitted that he informed law enforcement that he had a gun, a bomb on his person, and hidden bombs in four locations around the Showboat property. Kilkeary then threaten to detonate the bombs if the Showboat did not produce \$3 million in \$100 bills in exchange for the three remaining hostages, he admitted.

Kilkeary admitted that he intended to escape by driving the shuttle bus into the inlet, and using his scuba gear to reach the far bank of the inlet where he had hidden clothes and money.

After hours of negotiation, Kilkeary was eventually taken into custody.

The charge of making threats carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of kidnapping carries a maximum statutory prison sentence of life in prison and a fine of \$250,000. The extortion count carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Sheridan will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Marra credited Special Agents of the FBI's Atlantic City Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun in Newark, and Police Officers with the Atlantic City Police Department, under the direction of Chief John J. Mooney, with the investigation.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ronald Chillemi, of the U.S. Attorney's Criminal Division in Trenton.

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Defense Attorney: Michael J. Engle, Esq. Philadelphia