

Department of Justice

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BUFFALO MAN ACCUSED OF MURDERING GIRLFRIEND AND SETTING FIRES FOR INSURANCE BENEFITS

BUFFALO, N.Y. - U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that a federal grand jury has returned a seven count Indictment charging Ronald Epps, 44, of Amherst, N.Y., with wire fraud, mail fraud, arson and possession of Molotov Cocktails. The charges carry a mandatory minimum penalty of 30 years in prison, a maximum of life, a \$1,500,000 fine or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Melissa M. Marangola, who is handling the case, stated that according to the Indictment, the defendant is accused of murdering his fiancée, Angela Moss, on August 27, 2009 in order to collect on the victim's life insurance policy which listed Epps as the sole beneficiary.

The Indictment states that in August 2009, Ronald Epps and Angela Moss were engaged to be married and lived together on Cascade Drive in the Town of Amherst. Previously, on July 2, 2009, Epps and Moss went to a State Farm Insurance branch to make changes to Moss' life insurance policy. At the time, Epps was a minor beneficiary. The \$100,000 policy was changed, making the defendant the sole beneficiary.

According to the Indictment, on August 27, 2009, Moss left her place of employment at Absolut Care on Armor Road in Orchard Park at 11:00 p.m. The victim was last seen getting into the passenger seat of her car. Moss' body was discovered at 6:00 a.m. the following morning on California Road by colleagues heading into work. The Indictment alleges that the defendant waited in the victim's car then drove to California Road where Epps shot Moss once in the back of her head and left her body on the side of the road. The victim's car was also found abandoned nearby.

On September 1, 2009, Epps filed a claim State Farm Insurance, attempting to collect on Moss's life insurance policy. To date, the defendant has not received any insurance money related to the policy on the late Ms. Moss.

Following Moss's murder, the defendant remained in the apartment the two had lived in together. On August 1, 2010, Epps obtained a renter's insurance policy from State Farm Insurance. The Indictment states that on October 13, 2010, Epps set fire to the vacant apartment next door with Molotov Cocktails. On this occasion, the damage to the defendant's apartment was minimal. On October 15, the defendant is accused of setting fire to his own apartment. On May 31, 2011, Epps received \$3, 769 from State Farm Insurance for damages to his property.

“This Office will not tolerate any who seek to profit from the commission of violent crime, and we stand ready to assist all levels of law enforcement in this regard,” said U. S. Attorney Hochul. “I need to particularly commend two groups whose tireless efforts helped solve these three cold cases: the officers of Orchard Park, Amherst and ATF who never stopped investigating these crimes, and the members of the Moss family who never stopped believing that whomever killed Angela would one day be brought to justice.”

Epps is currently under federal indictment for a gun charge involving a weapon discovered by police in his home the day Angela Moss' body was discovered.

The Indictment is the culmination of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Frank Christiano, the Orchard Park Police Department, under the direction of Chief Andrew Benz, and the Amherst Police Department, under the direction of Chief John Askey.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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