

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Retalio

I, Brendan ~~Retalio~~, *David R. Kennedy* Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) Special Agent, being duly sworn, state and depose as follows: *BR / 2/2/21*

Background

1. I am assigned to the Worcester Resident Agency of the Boston Division of the FBI. Part of my duties as a Special Agent involve the investigation of federal violations and offenses related to financial crime, fraud, and illicit finance.

2. The FBI has been investigating a network of co-conspirators involved in a series of cargo thefts throughout the United States, in violation of federal criminal law, including 18 U.S.C. §§ 371 and 2314 (interstate transportation of stolen goods, and conspiracy to commit that offense) (the “Subject Offenses”).

3. By way of background, a common practice for shippers seeking to have their goods transported from a warehouse to a customer is to hire a third-party carrier, often a trucking transporter, to pick up the goods from the warehouse and deliver the goods to the customer. A shipper will advertise the goods that they want transported, typically online, and carriers bid on the transportation contracts. The shippers evaluate which carrier to select based on reputation and price. Shippers can receive notice, by various means, if a prospective carrier is known engage in cargo theft. Once a carrier is selected for a job, the shipper provides the carrier with information to provide to a warehouse to demonstrate that the carrier is authorized to pick up the cargo.

4. There is evidence that the co-conspirators under investigation have infiltrated e-mail addresses of legitimate truck-load carriers and used the hacked email accounts to book loads of cargo with shippers. Instead of delivering the cargo loads to the customers who have purchased the goods, the co-conspirators sell the items elsewhere, for illicit profit.

5. There is probable cause that Romoy Forbes (YOB 1995) of New York has engaged in the conspiracy and committed the Subject Offenses.

Probable Cause

A. Forbes conspired to steal seafood in Worcester, Massachusetts in July 2025

6. Person 1 reported to the FBI that on July 15, 2025, approximately 33,750 pounds of frozen snow crabs worth approximately \$325,000, was stolen in Worcester, Massachusetts. Shipper 1, the trucking and warehousing business that Person 1 was working for, had advertised on an online freight exchange service board, for the load of frozen crabs to be shipped from Worcester to Jacksonville, Florida.¹ The seafood was being stored at Storage Business 1 in Worcester.

7. On July 14, 2025, Shipper 1 was contacted by phone, purportedly by Carrier 1, a trucking carrier company, requesting to transport the cargo to Florida, and Shipper 1 agreed to contract with Carrier 1.² A purported employee of Carrier 1 provided to Person 1 a true email address of Carrier 1 (the “Carrier 1 Email Address”),³ and Person 1 sent to the Carrier 1 Email Address, a shipping setup package for the load, to be filled out by Carrier 1. At the time, the Carrier 1 Email Address had been hacked into, and the purported employee of Carrier 1 who controlled the email account was really a co-conspirator in the scheme. The co-conspirator replied to Person 1’s email, with the setup package, filled out.

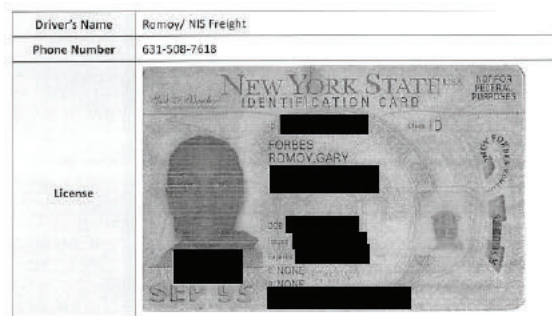
8. On the morning of July 15, 2025, Forbes arrived at Storage Business 1 to retrieve the frozen seafood. Forbes provided his New York state identification card, and phone number

¹ Shipper 1 is headquartered in Maine.

² Carrier 1 is headquartered in Illinois.

³ The email was registered by Carrier 1 with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that regulates the trucking industry.

(the “Forbes Phone Number”) to Storage Business 1, and surveillance footage from inside Storage Business 1 captured images of Forbes.



Surveillance footage from outside of Storage Business 1 showed that Forbes arrived in a red truck with no logos related to Carrier 1.



9. Close in time to when Forbes arrived at Storage Business 1, the co-conspirator sent an email from the Carrier 1 Email Account to Person 1, stating, “Hey my driver is checked in, we need pu [pickup] numbers”. Person 1 replied, in part, that Person 1 needed the driver to send a picture of the side of the truck that the driver would be using to transport the seafood. The co-conspirator then emailed, from the Carrier 1 Email Account to Person 1, three images purportedly depicting the side of the driver’s (Forbes’s) truck. The images were pictures of a gray truck with the Carrier 1 logo and motor carrier number on the side of the truck.⁴ These images did not match the truck that Forbes had driven to Storage Business 1 to retrieve the seafood, but Shipper 1 was unaware of the discrepancy.

⁴ A trucking motor carrier, or “mc” number, is a unique identifier from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration that grants carriers legal permission to transport regulated goods across state lines for compensation.



10. Person 1 informed the co-conspirator communicating as Carrier 1 that Person 1 needed the driver's phone number to track the load using a third-party truck-delivery tracking GPS service. The co-conspirator provided Person 1 with a phone number that was not the Forbes Phone Number, which Person 1 inputted into the tracking system. A link was sent to the provided phone number, which accepted tracking, and displayed the driver (Forbes) as present at Storage Business

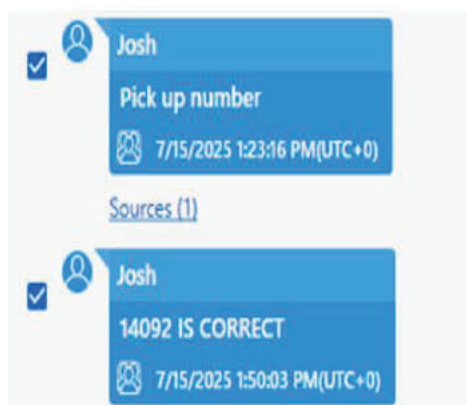
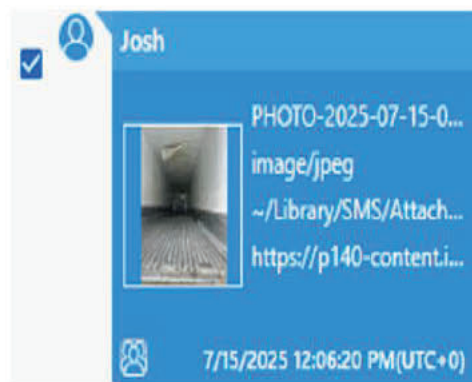
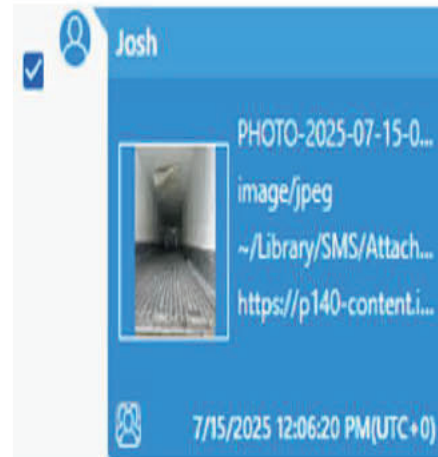
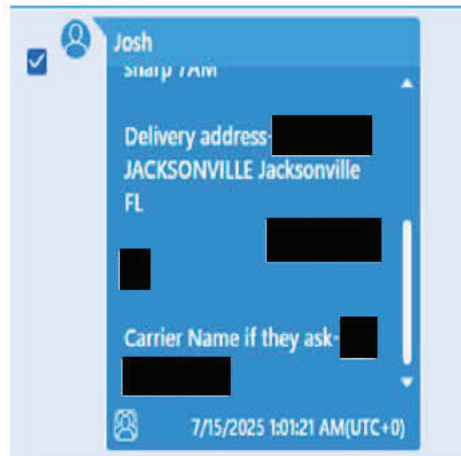
1. Shipper 1 then sent a pickup number to the co-conspirator in the scheme, who provided the number to Forbes.

11. Forbes did not deliver the cargo load of frozen crabs to the customer. On July 16, 2025, the tracking device that was supposed to be tracking Forbes and the load that he had retrieved, was not tracking. Person 1 contacted the Carrier 1 main phone number. Person 1 spoke to employees of Carrier 1, who explained that their computer system had been hacked, and that they could see the e-mail that Person 1 received, purportedly from Carrier 1, arranging to receive the seafood, but that Carrier 1 had not, in fact, booked the cargo load.

12. Person 1 then called Forbes at the Forbes Phone Number, which Forbes had left with Storage Business 1. Forbes acknowledged that he had picked up the load from Storage Business 1, but claimed that his dispatcher, 'Josh,' had Forbes give Forbes' trailer to someone else. Forbes provided Person 1 with the purported phone number of 'Josh' (the "Purported Carrier 1 Dispatcher Phone Number"). Person 1 called the Purported Carrier 1 Dispatcher Phone Number and spoke to an individual, who said not to worry about the delivery. Person 1 told the individual that he would be contacting the police, and the individual said, "F**k the police" and hung up on Person 1.

13. The FBI obtained the contents of Forbes' cellphone, which had been using the Forbes Phone Number. On the night of July 14, 2025, and the morning of July 15, 2025, a contact in Forbes' phone listed as 'Josh' (but not the Purported Carrier 1 Dispatcher Phone Number) texted Forbes the false information that was being provided to Shipper 1 in support of the fraudulent claim that Carrier 1 was transporting the frozen seafood, including: "Carrier Name if they ask – [Carrier 1]"; the three images of the gray truck with the Carrier 1 logo and motor carrier number

on it; the Purported Carrier 1 Dispatcher Phone Number; and the load pickup number that Shipper 1 had provided.⁵



⁵ As seen in the text messages, the time stamps for the messages are recorded in UTC time.

14. In fact: Forbes did not work for Carrier 1; he did not drive the grey truck depicted in the pictures emailed to Shipper 1 over the hacked Carrier 1 Email Account, and which 'Josh' texted to Forbes; to retrieve the cargo, Forbes used the pickup number that 'Josh' received from Shipper 1 and then texted to Forbes; and, as described above, the Purported Carrier 1 Dispatcher Phone Number that Forbes' contact 'Josh' texted to Forbes and which Forbes then provided to Shipper 1, was used to further the fraud.

15. Below, from Forbes' cellphone, is an image of the stolen frozen crab load from the evening of July 15, 2025. Coordinates from Forbes' cellphone list him, at the time of the picture, at a particular location in Queens, New York City. I found online that at this same location is a grocery store company, which operates a number of grocery stores in various states. The backdrop of the crab load below also appears similar to the loading dock for the grocery store company, which I reviewed on Google Maps.



Below, from publicly available sources, is a representative picture of what the brand of frozen crabs would have looked like up close, which appears similar to the boxes visible at a distance in the stolen crab load above.



B. Before the seafood theft in Worcester, Forbes conspired to steal blueberries in New Jersey

16. Evidence reveals that the seafood heist, described above, was not the first theft that Forbes committed as part of the conspiracy. Person 2 of Shipper 2, a freight service company operating in New Jersey, reported to the FBI that on June 25, 2025, Shipper 2 advertised on an online freight exchange service board, for a load of blueberries to be transported from New Jersey to Illinois.⁶ Shipper 2 received an e-mail, purportedly from Carrier 2, a trucking transportation company, requesting to accept the job to transport the blueberries.⁷ Really, Carrier 2's email had been hacked into, and was being controlled by a co-conspirator in the scheme.


17. On June 26, 2025, Forbes picked up the load in Winslow Junction, New Jersey, at Storage Business 2. Forbes signed his name on the pickup sheet, and noted the Forbes Phone

⁶ Shipper 2 is based in Virginia.

⁷ Carrier 2 appears to be based in New Jersey.

Number as his phone number, which, as described above, was the same phone number that Forbes later provided to Storage Business 1 in Massachusetts.

FOB 13



FOB Sheet

TRIP#

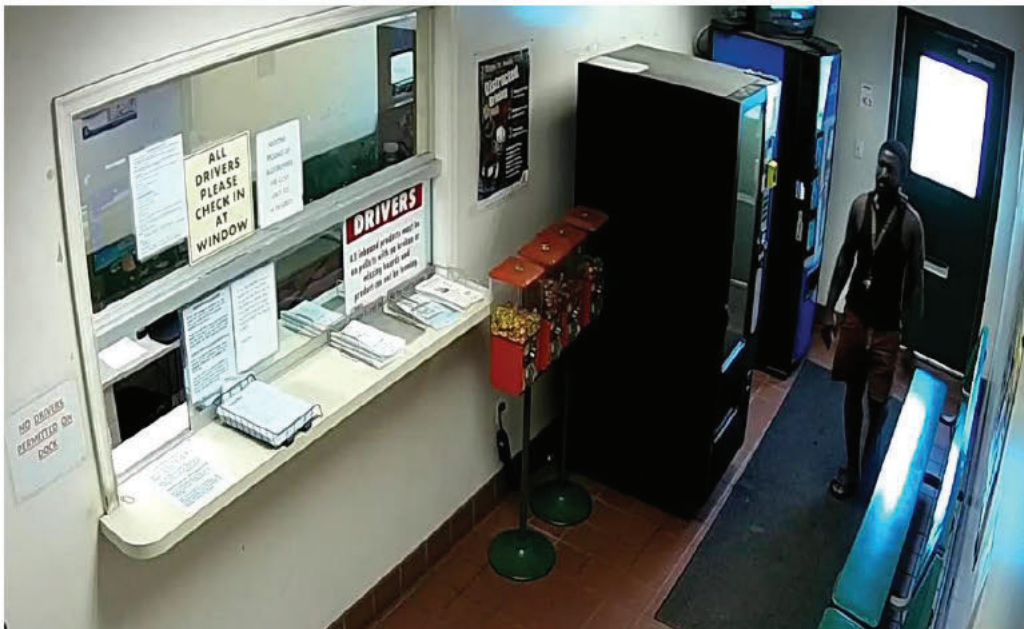
57568

Truck Name: 66D
 Driver Name: FORBES
 Cell Phone #: [REDACTED]
 Customer: [REDACTED]
 Pick Up #: 57156
 Customer PO #: _____
 Trailer Size: 52'
 Trailer #: 1001
 Trailer Temp: 53° Precooled: ☒
 Time in: 6:55 PM
 Time out: _____
 Load Instructions: 1 Pallet on board Building

Door #: 4 Date: 6/26/25

SO#: 574656
 SO#: _____
 SO#: _____
 SO#: _____

Surveillance footage from inside Storage Business 2 captured an image of Forbes.



18. Forbes drove a red truck to retrieve the blueberries at Storage Business 2 in New Jersey, as he later did to retrieve the seafood from Storage Business 1 in Massachusetts.

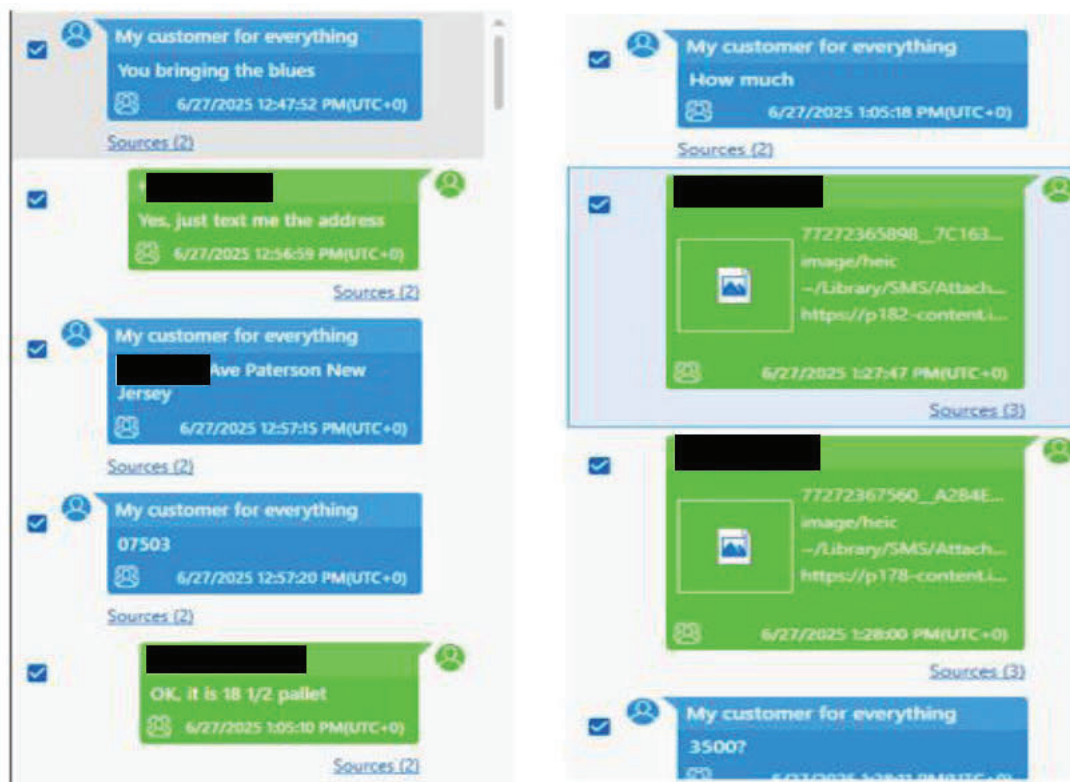


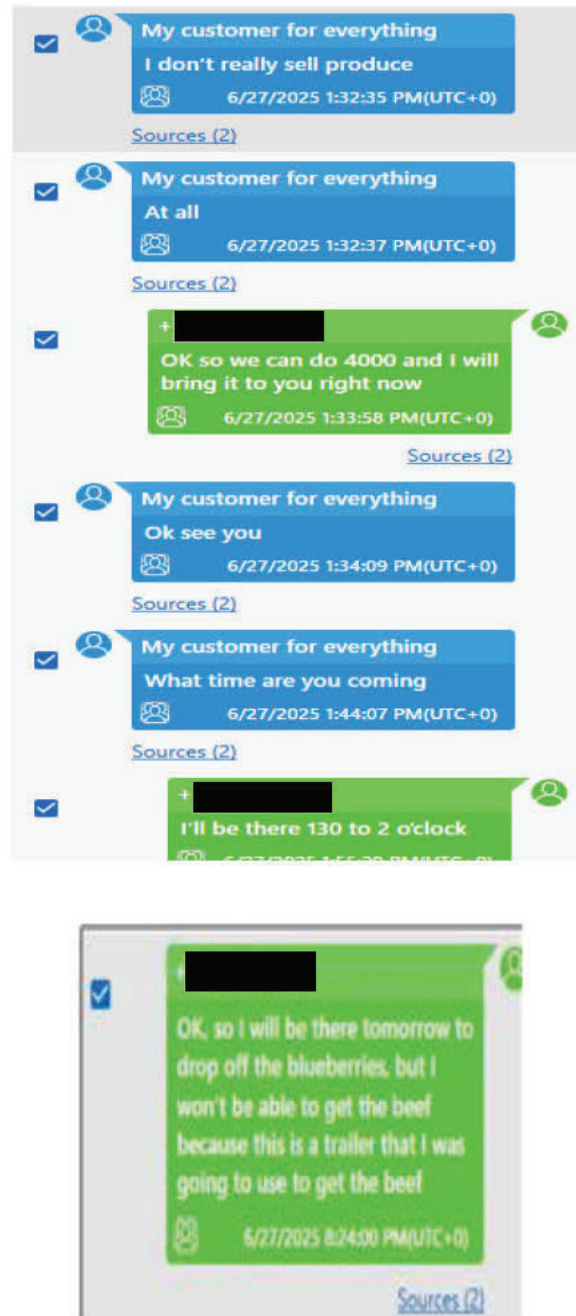
19. Forbes never delivered the blueberries to the customer. Person 2 contacted Carrier 2, and an employee of Carrier 2 explained that Carrier 2's computer systems had been hacked, and that Carrier 2 had never contracted to carry the load of blueberries.

20. The contents of Forbes' cell phone show that on June 27, 2025, Forbes exchanged text messages with a contact that he had saved in his phone as "my customer for everything." Forbes sent the contact a photograph of pallets of blueberries, which were the same brand of blueberries that Forbes had retrieved from Storage Business 2.



21. Forbes and his “customer for everything” then discussed a price for the blueberries, agreeing on \$4,000. Forbes agreed to deliver the blueberries, for sale, to the contact, at an address in Paterson, New Jersey, with Forbes saying, “OK. So I will be there tomorrow to drop off the blueberries.”





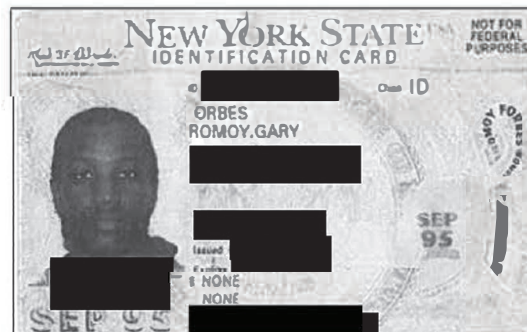
22. On June 30, 2025, Forbes' contact 'Josh' texted Forbes screenshots of text messages between 'Josh' and Person 2, and a recording of a phone call between 'Josh' and Person 2. In the recording and the text messages, 'Josh' denied to Person 2 responsibility for the theft of the blueberries.

C After the seafood and blueberry thefts, Forbes conspired to steal cologne in New York

23. Forbes, as part of the conspiracy, stole approximately \$433,830 worth of cologne.

24. Person 3 of Shipper 3, a freight brokerage company, reported to the FBI that on or about July 25, 2025, his business advertised for the load of fragrances to be delivered from New York to Los Angeles, California.⁸ On July 25, 2025, Shipper 3 received an e-mail from a true email account of Carrier 3, a trucking company, requesting the details of the advertised load.⁹ In reality, the email account of Carrier 3 (the “Carrier 3 Email Account”) had been hacked into by a co-conspirator in the scheme. Shipper 3 informed the purported Carrier 3 that the load would need to be picked up in Ronkonkama, New York by 5:30 P.M. on July 25, 2025. The co-conspirator emailed, over the Carrier 3 Email Account, agreeing to do the job, and then at 5:28 p.m. emailed, “Both of our company driver are there now Romoy will pick up this one Romoy Forbes Trk 212 Trailer 167”.

25. At the pickup of the goods, Forbes provided his state identification card to the warehouse.



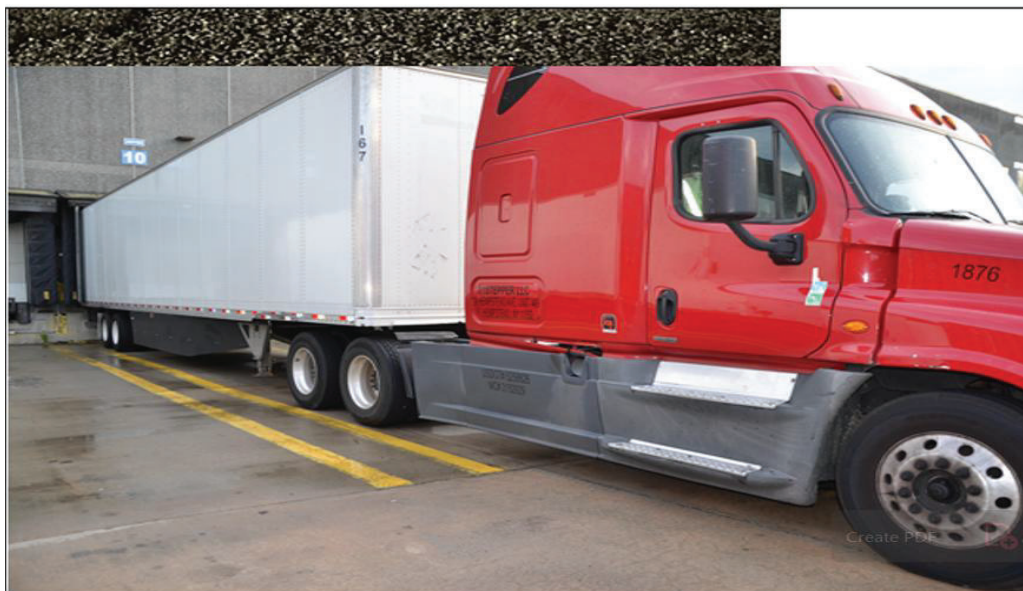
26. Forbes had the boxes of fragrances loaded into the truck.

⁸ Shipper 3 is based in Illinois.

⁹ Carrier 3 is based in Illinois.



27. The truck that Forbes picked up the load in was red, and similar in appearance to the truck that Forbes had used for the prior thefts.



28. Forbes never delivered the goods to the customer. Shipper 3 called Carrier 3's main phone number. Staff at Carrier 3 informed Shipper 3 that Carrier 3 had never booked the load.

29. The contents of Forbes' cell phone show that on July 25, 2025, Forbes and contact 'Josh' exchanged text messages regarding the fragrance load. 'Josh' sent Forbes the address of Storage Business 3 and stated that there was no "PU#" – e.g., pickup number – for the "perfume."

Forbes asked, “text me the name of the company I’m driving” to which ‘Josh’ responded, “[Carrier 3]”.



30. On the night of July 25, 2025, Forbes sent ‘Josh’ a video of the fragrance load. Below are still images from parts of the video.



31. Forbes also texted “my customer for everything” the same video of the fragrance boxes that he had sent to ‘Josh’, noting “14 pallets”, as well as a copy of the bill of lading from Storage Business 3, and the contact replied, “Ok”.



Conclusion

32. Based on the foregoing information, I respectfully request that the Court issue a criminal complaint charging Romoy Forbes with violating 18 U.S.C. §§ 371 and 2314 (interstate transportation of stolen goods, and conspiracy to commit that offense).

declare that the foregoing is true and correct.

Brendan Retalic
 Brendan Retalic
 Special Agent
 Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to before me telephonically in accordance with Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 on this 14th day of January, 2026.

David H. Kennedy
 HONORABLE DAVID H. KENNEDY
 United States Magistrate Judge



11:35 a.m.