

Good afternoon. Thank you, Attorney General Nessel.

Last night, the FBI and Michigan State Police arrested six individuals charged in a federal complaint with conspiring to kidnap the Governor of Michigan, Gretchen Whitmer. According to the complaint unsealed this morning, Adam Fox, Barry Croft, Ty Garbin, Kaleb Franks, Daniel Harris and Brandon Caserta conspired to kidnap the Governor from her vacation home in the Western District of Michigan before the November election. Under federal law, each faces any term of years up to life in prison if convicted. Fox, Garbin, Franks, Harris, and Caserta are residents of Michigan. Croft is a resident of Delaware.

All of us standing here today want the public to know that Federal and State law enforcement are committed to working together to make sure violent extremists never succeed with their plans, particularly when they target our duly elected leaders.

The federal complaint in this case alleges that the FBI began an investigation earlier this year after becoming aware through social media that a group of individuals was discussing the violent overthrow of certain government and law enforcement components. Through confidential sources, undercover agents, and clandestine recordings, law enforcement learned particular individuals were planning to kidnap the Governor and acting in furtherance of that plan. The alleged conspirators used operational security measures, including communicating by encrypted messaging platforms and used code words and phrases in an attempt to avoid detection by law enforcement. Among other activities, members of the alleged conspiracy on two occasions conducted coordinated surveillance on the Governor's vacation home. Fox and Croft, according to the complaint, discussed detonating explosive devices to divert police from

the area of the home and Fox even inspected the underside of a Michigan highway bridge for places to seat an explosive. The complaint further alleges Fox purchased a taser for use in the kidnapping and that the group successfully detonated an improvised explosive device wrapped with shrapnel to test its anti-personnel capabilities. The FBI and Michigan State Police executed arrests as conspirators met on the east side of the state to pool funds for explosives and exchange tactical gear.

The investigation is ongoing. Agents of the Detroit Field Office of the FBI and other members of their Joint Terrorism Task Force, including the Michigan State Police, are conducting the investigation. Agents in the Baltimore Field Office, which covers Delaware, have also assisted. My office, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Michigan, is prosecuting this federal case. U.S. Attorney's Offices in the Eastern District of Michigan and Delaware have assisted. And the State of Michigan has brought related charges against other individuals.

Of course, those charged with a crime still have rights that we respect. The allegations in a complaint are accusations, and a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law. The defendants have made their initial appearance in federal court and the court will be scheduling their arraignments as well as bond and preliminary hearings.

It is my privilege now to introduce to you the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, Matthew Schneider, for additional remarks.