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Albany, New York Woman Charged with ISIS-Inspired Terror Plot Targeting New York State Capitol

WASHINGTON — Jessica Bowie, 35, of Albany, New York, made her initial appearance today in federal court on charges of attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, ISIS.

“As alleged, Bowie plotted to deploy an explosive device at the New York State Capitol, intending to kill public officials and to destroy ‘as much of the building as possible’ before fleeing to ISIS-controlled territory in Syria,” said Assistant Attorney General for National Security John A. Eisenberg. “The National Security Division and our law-enforcement partners are committed to the painstaking work of preventing plots like this from succeeding and securing convictions against those who attempt such plots.”

“The American people represent an undying spirit of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — values fundamentally opposed by foreign terrorist organizations such as the one this defendant allegedly pledged her support to,” said First Assistant U.S. Attorney John A. Sarcone III for the Northern District of New York. “I am incredibly proud to work side by side with the men and women of the FBI and our law enforcement partners who identified, investigated, and ultimately stopped this defendant before she was able to act on her plot to bring terror to the Capital Region and the United States. My office looks forward to aggressively prosecuting this case and delivering justice for the American people.”

“The FBI detected and stopped an alleged plot to attack the New York State Capitol and kill elected officials,” said Operations Director Matt Fodor of the FBI National Security Branch. “According to the criminal complaint, the defendant in this case swore allegiance to ISIS and wanted to follow up with additional horrific acts of terrorism. This case is yet another example of how this FBI is built to not only identify threats of terrorism quickly, but to stop their alleged plots before they are able to harm the American people. I want to commend the FBI Albany Field Office, the Justice Department, and our law enforcement partners for their outstanding work in this case. Cooperation and partnership are essential to protecting the U.S. homeland.”

On Aug.19, Bowie was apprehended by law enforcement as she gained possession of what she believed to be an explosive device, with the intent of targeting the New York State Capitol and New York State Senators.



Bowie buying items necessary to build an explosive device

Through the course of the investigation and as alleged in the government’s complaint, investigators learned that Bowie had intended to conduct the attack before fleeing to Syria to join others in ISIS-controlled territories. She was observed making several visits to the New York State Capitol grounds and taking several photographs of the building. In describing the New York State Capitol building as her target, Bowie stated: “I want to destroy as much of the building as possible and kill the senators while they are meeting. I want them to lose a lot of important documents as well” and “I want it to have a affect on the American system. And destroy some of the taghut.”



Bowie doing reconnaissance on New York Capitol

According to the complaint, Jessica Bowie has expressed anti-American messages online. On one account identified as belonging to Bowie, she said, "Praise be to Allah for September 11th" and "When I can migrate, I will poison these infidels." Further, Bowie recorded and disseminated to others online her "Bayah," or formal oath of allegiance to ISIS.

The case is being investigated by the FBI with assistance from the U. S. Secret Service, New York State Police, and Albany Police Department.

Trial Attorney Ryan D. White of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Richard Belliss and Joseph Hartunian for the Northern District of New York are prosecuting the case.

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