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U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Tennessee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sparta Woman Pleads Guilty To Concealing Material Support Intended For a Foreign Terrorist Organization

NASHVILLE – A Sparta, Tennessee, woman pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court today to concealing material support and resources intended to be provided to a Foreign Terrorist Organization, announced U.S. Attorney Mark H. Wildasin for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Georgianna A.M. Giampietro, 36, was indicted by a federal grand jury in August 2019, charging her with attempting to provide material support to a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. She was arrested at her home by FBI agents shortly thereafter and remains in custody. A superseding Information filed last week charges Giampietro with Concealment of Material Support and Resources Intended to be Provided to a Foreign Terrorist Organization, the charge to which she pleaded guilty.

"I commend our law enforcement partners and our prosecutors who have worked diligently to investigate this case and bring this individual to justice," said U.S. Attorney Wildasin. "All attempts to provide support to terrorist organizations will receive the full attention and resources of our office and law enforcement to ensure that those who engage in such activity are held accountable. The safety and security of the American public demands no less."

"Protecting the United States from terrorist attacks is the FBI's number one priority," said Special Agent in Charge Douglas M. Korneski of the FBI Memphis Field Office. "This case once again demonstrates the FBI's dedication to vigorously pursue those who provide material support to terrorist organizations, and hold them accountable for their conspiratorial actions. I am proud of the personnel who worked countless hours to protect the community, and I want to thank all of the agencies that participate in the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force. Together, we combine our resources to identify and disrupt threats to protect our community."

According to court documents, Giampietro admitted that, in September 2018, she had conversations with an undercover agent who expressed interest in travelling to Syria to join Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS), a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. The undercover agent told Giampietro that her husband swore an oath of allegiance to HTS and that he intended to fight on behalf of HTS.

Giampietro initially provided instruction and advice to the undercover agent on how to travel to Syria in order to avoid detection by law enforcement, including actions that the undercover agent and her husband should

undertake before making the trip, including severing ties with other persons 6-8 months in advance; acquiring new phones before they traveled; and to consider traveling through Turkey prior to entering Syria.

In subsequent conversations with the undercover agent, Giampietro offered to communicate with her contacts on their behalf to assist them in safely traveling to Syria to join HTS. Giampietro engaged in a series of communications with an individual whom she knew could assist the undercover and her husband for such purpose. At one point after communicating with her contact, who claimed that there was presently no jihad in Syria, Giampietro asked the undercover agent if she and her husband had considered traveling to Afghanistan since they were still fighting there.

Giampietro later provided the undercover agent with her contact's information to assist her and her husband in their travel to Syria. When Giampietro provided the contact, she knew that HTS was a designated terrorist organization and believed that the undercover agent and her husband intended to travel to Syria to work under the direction and control of HTS and believed that the contact would substantially assist them in this effort. In addition, Giampietro intended that the undercover agent and her husband would provide funds to that person who in turn would provide funds to HTS, thereby providing material support to HTS disguised as a charitable contribution.

Giampietro utilized an end-to-end encrypted social media platform to communicate with the undercover and with her contact, and in some instances, utilized self-destruct timers within her communications so that those communications would automatically delete, without the possibility of recovery, after a specified time.

Giampietro faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine when she is sentenced on May 6, 2022.

This case was investigated by the FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Philip H. Wehby, Ben Schrader, and Kathryn Risinger of the Middle District of Tennessee, and Trial Attorney Jennifer Levy of the Department of Justice's National Security Division, are prosecuting the case.

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