



The United States Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 2019

TWO SUBURBAN CHICAGO MEN CONVICTED OF CONSPIRING TO PROVIDE MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ISIS

Men Conspired to Help Individual They Believed Would Travel to Syria to Fight for ISIS, Provided Cell Phones They Believed Would be Used in Explosive Attacks Overseas

WASHINGTON — Two men from a north suburb of Chicago have been convicted of conspiring to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham, a foreign terrorist organization also known as ISIS. Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers, U.S. Attorney John R. Lausch Jr. and Special Agent-in-Charge Jeffrey S. Sallet of the FBI's Chicago Field Office made the announcement.

The jury in federal court in Chicago on Thursday convicted Joseph D. Jones, 37, and Edward Schimenti, 37, both of Zion, Illinois, on one count of conspiring to provide material support and resources to ISIS. Schimenti was also convicted on one count of making false statements to the FBI.

The material support charge is punishable by a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison, while the false statement count carries a maximum sentence of eight years. U.S. District Judge Andrea R. Wood did not immediately set a sentencing date. A status hearing was scheduled for Aug. 14, 2019.

The case was investigated by the Chicago Joint Terrorism Task Force, which is comprised of numerous federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

Evidence at trial revealed that Jones and Schimenti advocated on social media for violent extremism in support of the terrorist group. In 2015, Jones and Schimenti began meeting with undercover FBI employees and individuals who were cooperating with law enforcement. During the meetings, Jones and Schimenti discussed their devotion to ISIS and their commitment to ISIS' violent extremist principles. Many of

these meetings occurred in the north suburbs of Chicago. Jones and Schimenti at one point shared photographs of themselves holding the ISIS flag at the Illinois Beach State Park in Zion.

In 2017, the pair furnished cellular phones to a cooperating individual, believing the phones would be used to detonate explosive devices in ISIS attacks overseas. On April 7, 2017, Jones and Schimenti drove the cooperating individual to O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, with the understanding that the cooperating individual would be traveling to Syria to fight with ISIS.

The false statement conviction against Schimenti stems from the materially false statements he gave to the FBI after his arrest. During the interview, Schimenti said he had never engaged in conversations about bomb detonators, and that he was under the impression the phones would be repaired and re-sold and not used for any other purpose.

The Zion Police Department provided valuable assistance. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Barry Jonas, Rajnath Laud and David Rojas of the Northern District of Illinois and Trial Attorney Alexandra S. Hughes of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Division.

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