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TODD SPITZER

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PRESS RELEASE

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Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer Issues Statement on Efforts to Keep Self-Identified School Shooter Behind Bars

SANTA ANA, Calif. – Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer and the UCI Police Department have been aggressively trying to keep a former UCI student and self-identified school shooter behind bars but limitations in California law have already let him out of state prison once despite increasingly serious online threats he has made to commit a mass school shooting at UCI.

He is now facing additional charges after posting threatening social media posts shortly following his release from prison implying he would make good on his threats to carry out a Virginia Tech-like school shooting and that it would feel good to kill UCI students. But despite charging the case to the fullest extent under the law, he faces just a maximum sentence of 4 years and 4 months in state prison.

“This is someone who has repeatedly threatened to shoot up a college campus and has the weaponry and ammo to do it behind bars and I’m mad as hell that the state Legislature refuses to give me the tools to put him behind bars where he belongs for a very long time. When someone shows us who they are and what they are capable of doing we have to believe them - and do something about it. We charged this individual not once but twice with everything we could possibly charge him with at the state level - and it’s not enough. He’s going to keep getting out and he’s going to keep making preparations to make good on his promises to carry out a Virginia Tech style shooting at UCI. We have to have a state legislature that is going to stand up and help us keep guns out of the hands of the mentally ill. We can’t wait until another tragedy.”

Sebastian Dumbrava, 30, was charged by the Orange County District Attorney’s Office in January 2020 with 24 weapons counts related to his unlawful possession of 22 extended magazines, including thirty-round rifle magazines, 1,199 rounds of .300 AAC Blackout rifle ammunition, and all the components required to assemble a functioning semi-automatic rifle. Dumbrava, who was expelled from UCI in 2019, was prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition as a result of his commitment between March 30, 2019 and April 2, 2019 on a mental health hold. Prior to discharging the defendant on April 2, 2019, a nurse advised him that he was prohibited from possessing a firearm and ammunition.

On January 1, 2020, the defendant posted a quote on his Twitter account from Seung-Hui Cho, who perpetrated the 2007 Virginia Tech school shooting and mass murder. That quote read: “You forced me into a corner and gave me only one option. The decision was yours. Now you have blood on your hands that will never wash off.”

UCI police uncovered the illegal ammunition, high capacity magazines and all of the necessary components to build an AR-15 while serving a search warrant on Dumbrava's residence in January 2020 and arrested him.

While awaiting trial, prosecutors successfully fought back against Dumbrava's attempts to be released on \$0 bail as part of the Court's emergency order to reduce the Orange County jail population during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prosecutors argued Dumbrava's online threats and the means to carry out those threats posed not only a significant public safety threat to the UCI community, but the community at large and asked his \$1 million bail remain. Dumbrava has displayed severe emotional distress, fixation on violence - particularly gun violence, sophistication in circumventing background checks, escalating behavior, and stockpiling of ammunition and magazines. A judge agreed with prosecutors and Dumbrava remained jailed with bail set at \$1 million.

Appellate court rulings in the middle of the court proceedings invalidating the ban on extended magazines forced a judge to dismiss the 22 counts of possession of an illegal magazine, reducing Dumbrava's maximum possible sentence from 17 years to 3 years and 8 months in state prison. He was convicted of unlawful possession of a firearm and possession of ammunition by a prohibited person and sentenced to the maximum 3 years and 8 months in state prison.

Dumbrava filed a civil lawsuit against the UCI Police Department alleging he had been wrongfully subjected to a mental health hold and threatened to shoot UCI students unless UCI paid him.

Dumbrava was released from prison on October 15, 2021 and placed on supervised probation and ordered to wear a GPS monitor.

Dumbrava violated the terms of his probation and continued to post threatening social media posts targeting UCI. Authorities executing a search warrant found evidence to allow prosecutors to charge Dumbrava with buying five high capacity magazines and illegally bringing them into California along with attempting to extort money from the University of California regents.

There has been an increasing level of seriousness connected to the social media posts that has made since being released from prison. Dumbrava has made reference via Twitter to the deadliest mass shooting committed by an individual in United States history, the 2017 Las Vegas Route 91 Harvest music festival shooting that left 58 dead. He has made reference to content related to Usama bin Ladin, an international terrorist leader who was responsible for the September 11, 2001 attack on the New York World Trade Center. He posted a quote from Timothy McVeigh, an American domestic terrorist responsible for the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing of an FBI federal building.

Dumbrava has shown the ability to travel out of state and obtain firearms parts, ammunition, and magazines, despite being a prohibited person. Dumbrava via social media the malicious intent associated with the acquisition of these items. In a sworn declaration, a UCI police officer wrote the amount of ammunition loaded into large capacity magazines at his residence, as well as, the specific examples of mass casualty events posted by Dumbrava leads him to believe that "if Dumbrava were to commit an act of violence, the result would have multiple victims."

Dumbrava has been charged with one felony count of sending a threatening letter for extortion, one felony count of attempted extortion by threat, and five felony counts of bringing a large capacity magazine illegally into California.

Last week a judge ruled there was enough evidence to hold Dumbrava over for trial on all seven counts. Dumbrava remains in custody on \$1 million bail.

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