

Man extradited from Sweden on charges related to fires at Jewish Institutions in Massachusetts

“BOSTON – A Massachusetts man has been extradited from Stockholm, Sweden to face charges in connection with his alleged obstruction of an investigation into fires set at Jewish institutions in Arlington, Needham and Chelsea, Mass. in May 2019.

Alexander Giannakakis, 37, formerly of Quincy, Mass., was indicted by a federal grand jury in Boston in 2019 for making false statements in a matter involving domestic terrorism; falsifying, concealing and covering up a material fact in a matter involving domestic terrorism; concealing records in a federal investigation; tampering with documents and objects; and tampering with an official proceeding.

After the indictment was returned, at the request of the United States, Giannakakis was arrested by Swedish authorities in a Stockholm suburb. The United States subsequently sought Giannakakis’ extradition from Sweden to the United States to face charges in Boston.

In connection with his arrest in Sweden, authorities learned that he unlawfully possessed a firearm and other weapons in Sweden. Giannakakis was charged and convicted of those crimes and served a sentence in Swedish prison. On Dec. 4, 2023, near the completion of that jail sentence, the Supreme Court of Sweden ruled favorably on the United States’ extradition request, and on Dec. 21, 2023, the Government of Sweden granted the request for Giannakakis’ extradition.

Giannakakis arrived at Boston’s Logan airport on Feb. 2, 2024

and will appear in federal court in Boston tomorrow afternoon.

According to the indictment, in and around February 2020, Giannakakis' younger brother became the prime suspect in an investigation into four fires set at Jewish-related institutions in the Boston area: the first during the evening of May 11, 2019 at a Chabad Center in Arlington; the second at the same location during the evening of May 16, 2019; the third at a Chabad Center in Needham; and the fourth during the evening of May 26, 2019 at Jewish-affiliated business in Chelsea.

Giannakakis' younger brother was hospitalized in a coma at the time he was identified as a suspect in February 2020. He remained in a coma until his death later that year.

According to the indictment, Giannakakis left the United States with his younger brother's electronic devices and papers and brought them to Sweden, where he was living at the time. According to court documents, when Giannakakis returned to the U.S. in March 2020, he was questioned by investigators and made false and misleading statements. Giannakakis allegedly removed and concealed physical evidence being sought by investigators which implicated his brother. Shortly after concealing that evidence, Giannakakis departed the United States for Sweden. Giannakakis remained in Sweden until his arrest by Swedish authorities in February 2022.

The charges of making false statements in a matter involving domestic terrorism and falsifying, concealing, and covering up a material fact in a matter involving domestic terrorism by trick, scheme, and device each provide for a sentence of up to eight years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charges of concealing records in a federal investigation, tampering with documents and objects, and tampering with an official proceeding each provide for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are

imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy; Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; Chief Juliann Flaherty of the Arlington Police Department; Chief John Schlittler of the Needham Police Department; and Chief Keith E. Houghton of the Chelsea Police Department made the announcement today. Substantial assistance was provided by Swedish authorities including the Swedish Security Service; the National Security Unit of Sweden's National Public Prosecution Department; and Sweden's Ministry of Justice. The investigation is being led by the FBI Boston's Joint Terrorism Task Force. Additional assistance was provided by the Quincy Massachusetts Police Department; the Massachusetts State Police; and the Massachusetts State Fire Marshal. The Justice Department's Office of International Affairs provided substantial assistance to secure the arrest and extradition from Sweden of Giannakakis. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jason A. Casey and John McNeil of the Office's National Security Unit.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law."-Massachusetts Department of Justice.