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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

3:25MJ511 (TOF)

STATE OF CONNECTICUT : ss: Hartford, Connecticut
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COUNTY OF HARTFORD : May 28, 2025

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF COMPLAINT

I, ALAN SZULWACH, being duly sworn, deposes and states as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) and have been an FBI Special Agent since 2020. Prior to that, I was an officer with the United States Park Police since 2009. I am currently assigned to the New Haven Division of the FBI. As an FBI Special Agent, I have conducted numerous investigations involving violations of federal laws.

2. I make this affidavit in support of an application for a criminal complaint charging Julius Jordan Priester (“PRIESTER”), an adult male born in 2000, and who has a Social Security Number, known to me, ending in 9482, with a violation of Title 49, United States Code, Section 46504 (interference with flight crew members and attendants) (the “TARGET OFFENSE”).

3. Based on the facts set forth below, I submit that there is probable cause to believe, and I do believe, that PRIESTER has committed the TARGET OFFENSE.

4. The statements contained in this affidavit are based in part on information provided by other members of local, state, and federal law enforcement; my own investigation to include personal observations, documents and other investigative materials that I have reviewed; and my training and experience as an FBI Special Agent. Since this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing a criminal complaint, I have not included every fact known to me concerning this investigation. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to

establish probable cause for the requested criminal complaint.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

5. This investigation concerns a violation of Title 49, United States Code, Section 46504, which makes it a crime for “[a]n individual on an aircraft in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States who, by assaulting or intimidating a flight crew member or flight attendant of the aircraft, interferes with the performance of the duties of the member or attendant or lessens the ability of the member or attendant to perform those duties, or attempts or conspires to do such an act[.]” The term “special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States” is defined to include an “aircraft in flight” that is a “civil aircraft of the United States.” 49 U.S.C. § 46501(2)(A).

PROBABLE CAUSE

6. On the night of Tuesday, May 27, 2025, I was notified that American Airlines Flight #3359 from Bradley International Airport in Hartford, Connecticut (“Bradley Airport”) to Chicago O’Hare International Airport had been diverted back to Bradley Airport at approximately 10:05pm that night. I was informed that the flight was diverted due to a disruptive passenger that had assaulted a member of the flight crew, forcing the captain to declare an emergency. The passenger was identified as PRIESTER.

7. According to statements made by one of the flight attendants (the “Victim”), whose identity is known to me, and other flight crew members and passengers, the Victim was seated in the back row of the plane. About thirty minutes to an hour into the flight, a passenger (later identified as PRIESTER) seated several rows ahead of the Victim stood up, began to take off his shirt, then ran to the back of the plane yelling “Help me.” PRIESTER grabbed the Victim by the shirt collar, shouted “you’re coming with me,” and forcefully brought the Victim to the

ground. PRIESTER then attempted to drag the Victim up the aisle. PRIESTER refused to comply with repeated flight crew instructions to cease his actions, and he held the Victim to the ground.

8. As this incident was occurring, another flight attendant notified the captain, who declared an emergency, and the flight was diverted back to Bradley Airport.

9. PRIESTER was returned to a seat after the intervention of passengers on board the aircraft. While under watch of one of the intervening passengers, PRIESTER continued to act in an erratic manner, grabbing and holding onto the arm of the passenger and making incoherent statements.

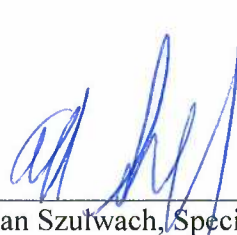
10. The aircraft landed safely at Bradley Airport and PRIESTER was removed from the aircraft by Connecticut State Police.

11. PRIESTER was then taken by ambulance to a local hospital for evaluation. After consultation with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Connecticut, I arrested him at the hospital.

12. During my interview of the Victim, the Victim informed me that PRIESTER's conduct interfered with the performance of his/her duties.

CONCLUSION

13. Based on the foregoing facts, I believe there is probable cause to believe that on or about May 27, 2025, in the District of Connecticut and elsewhere, PRIESTER committed a violation of Title 49, United States Code, Section 46504 (interference with flight crew members and attendants). Therefore, I respectfully request that a criminal complaint be issued charging PRIESTER with such offense.



Alan Szulwach, Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of May, 2025.



HON. THOMAS O. FARRISH
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE