FILED IN CHAMBERS
U.S.D.C ATLANTA

Date: Oct 07 2026

KEVIN P. WEIMER, Clerk

By: Christina Klimenko
Deputy Clerk

United States District Court

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

MICHAEL SHANE FORTNER

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Case Number: 2:26-MJ-31-AWH

I, Michael Baldino, the undersigned complainant depose and say under penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. On or about October 6, 2026 in Lumpkin County, in the Northern District of Georgia, defendant(s) did, violate Title 18, United States Code, Section § 875(c), threats made in interstate commerce, by consciously disregarding a substantial risk that his communication would be viewed as threatening violence, and knowingly transmitted a communication in interstate commerce.

in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section(s) 875(c).

I further state that I am a(n) Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and that this complaint is based on the following facts:

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED AFFIDAVIT

Continued on the attached sheet and made a part hereof. Yes

Signature of Complainant
Michael Baldino

Based upon this complaint, this Court finds that there is probable cause to believe that an offense has been committed and that the defendant has committed it. Sworn to me by telephone pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 4.1.

October 7, 2026 at 4:48 p.m.
Date

at Gainesville, Georgia
City and State

ANNA WHITE HOWARD
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
Name and Title of Judicial Officer

Signature of Judicial Officer

AUSA Drew F. Waldbeser
Drew.Waldbeser@usdoj.gov

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, Michael Baldino, state that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

Introduction

1. I make this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint alleging that MICHAEL SHANE FORTNER (hereinafter "FORTNER") violated 18 U.S.C. § 875(c), threats made in interstate commerce, on or about October 6, 2026, when he directly threatened Victim 1 (V1) in Lumpkin County, Georgia, in the Northern District of Georgia via his personal Facebook account, www.facebook.com/michaelshane.fortner.3.

Training and Experience

2. I am a Special Agent (SA) with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and have been employed there for approximately 14 years. I am currently assigned to the FBI Atlanta Division's Gainesville, Georgia office. As an FBI agent, I have investigated, received training, and have field experience investigating the diverse criminal violations over which the FBI has jurisdiction, to include domestic and international terrorism, crimes against children, firearms violations, illegal narcotics, and other violations of federal statutes. I have participated in the execution of numerous arrest and search warrants, which have resulted in arrests, convictions, and the recovery of evidence and contraband.

3. This affidavit is based upon my personal knowledge, training and experience, information obtained from other law enforcement officers, interviews of witnesses, and the review of records and information obtained during this investigation. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient

probable cause for the requested complaint. It does not set forth all of my knowledge, or the knowledge of others, about this matter.

Probable Cause

4. On or about October 6, 2026, at approximately 8:54 a.m., the FBI's National Threat Operations Center (NTOC) received a voluntary emergency disclosure of information from Meta containing subscriber information for Facebook user MICHAEL SHANE FORTNER regarding a threat to shoot V1 in the face today.

5. According to Meta, on or about October 6, 2026, at approximately 8:04 a.m., Facebook user michaelshane.fortner.3 posted: "[V1] been at it again disconnecting my internet so they can go to my house an steal stuff an not get caught by my cameras. I am gonna shoot that bitch in the face today. If your in Lumpkin County Georgia stay out of the town I am gonna erase the evil from that town today. Cock locked an ready to rock. I think today's the day police finally get to kill me like they wanted."

6. In addition to the post, Meta provided the following subscriber information for the Facebook user:

7. Display name: Michael Shane Fortner

8. Phone number: 706-344-9579

9. DOB: 03/19/1986

10. Username: michaelshane.fortner.3

11. Location of Facebook user at the time of the post: Reliance, Tennessee

12. Meta is a United States company that owns and operates Facebook, a social media platform, and is a provider of electronic communications services and remote computing services as defined by 18 U.S.C. §§ 2711(2) and 3127(1). Users can access Facebook and register for an account via its website (facebook.com) or via its mobile applications (Facebook and Messenger). Each

Facebook account is assigned a unique user ID number and may also be associated with a unique user-created username. Users can periodically change their usernames, but no two users can have the same username at the same time.

13. According to their website, Meta operates an extensive network of domestic and international data centers to support its platforms including Facebook with locations in over 27 U.S. locations as well as in Europe and Asia.

14. After receiving the report regarding the threatening communication, open-source database searches were conducted which confirmed the Verizon Wireless cellular telephone number provided by Meta for FORTNER's account and identified a brown 2025 Toyota Tacoma bearing Georgia license plate DEX8207 registered in his name.

15. A search of FORTNER's registered vehicle in the Flock Safety license plate reader (LPR) database located it traveling south on Georgia Highway 515 approximately 38 miles from the border Tennessee at approximately 10:44am and approximately an hour later traveling along east on Georgia Highway 52 toward the direction of Lumpkin County, Georgia at approximately 11:43 a.m.

16. Shortly after locating the vehicle, FBI Task Force Office Caleb Martin called Verizon Wireless and requested a one-time exigent ping to geo-locate the device associated with FORTNER's cellular telephone. According to the information provided by Verizon Wireless over the phone, the device associated with FORTNER's number was located within approximately 538 meters of Georgia Highway 52 near Amicalola Falls State Park at approximately 11:49 a.m. This location was a short distance away from where FORTNER's license plate was captured by a Flock Safety LPR camera at approximately 11:43 a.m.

17. Additional open-source searches were conducted to identify V1 during which an online public obituary notice for FORTNER's mother in April of 2025 was located. Among other surviving family members V1 was listed.

18. Database searches conducted on V1 identified V1's full name and address.

19. After locating FORTNER's vehicle in the area and identifying V1, in Dahlonega I contacted Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office Investigator Bryan de Klerk regarding the potential threat to life in the area.

20. Investigator de Klerk stated that he and other Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office deputies would attempt to intercept FORTNER's vehicle as it entered Lumpkin County. Based on the information provided regarding FORTNER's online threat, Investigator de Klerk advised there was probable cause to arrest him for terroristic threats.

21. At approximately 12:07 p.m., I called V1 to notify him of threats made online. V1 confirmed FORTNER's identity and that V1 and others had been threatened by FORTNER in the past. V1 stated that LCSO deputies had also alerted him about the threat and were stationed outside his home.

22. At approximately 12:13 p.m., FORTNER's vehicle was stopped by Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office deputies after he attempted to elude them. FORTNER was taken into custody. Following FORTNER's arrest, a loaded .38 caliber handgun and marijuana were found by deputies in a bag inside his vehicle. FORTNER was transported to the Lumpkin County jail and charged with terroristic threats, possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime, and possession of marijuana.

Conclusion

23. Based on the totality of the above, I submit there is probable cause to believe that FORTNER violated 18 U.S.C. § 875(c), threats made in interstate commerce,

by consciously disregarding a substantial risk that his communication would be viewed as threatening violence, and knowingly transmitted a communication in interstate commerce, on or about October 6, 2026, when, among other things, he posted that he was going to, "shoot that bitch in the face today" on his personal Facebook account.