

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF AN
APPLICATION FOR A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, Stephen Lawson, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I make this affidavit in support of an application for a criminal complaint charging William T. Griffith III (GRIFFITH) with possession of a firearm or ammunition by a prohibited person, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1).

2. I am a Columbus Regional Airport Authority (CRAA) Police Officer, assigned to the FBI JTTF, Cincinnati Field Division, Columbus Resident Agency. As such, I am an “investigative or law enforcement officer” of the United States within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2510(7), that is, an officer of the United States who is empowered by law to conduct investigations of and to make arrests for offenses enumerated in Title 18 United States Code, Section 2516(1). During this time, your affiant has accumulated the following training and experience:

- a. I graduated Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy in Marion, Ohio in January of 1996. I received continuous continuing education relating to law enforcement. The training included master criminal investigator, evidence collection, surveillance and electronic monitoring techniques, Felony and Misdemeanor investigations.
- b. As a Task Force Officer, I have participated in the execution of search warrants at residences of subjects connected to terrorism.
- c. During the course of my law enforcement career, I have had experience in debriefing defendants, interviewing participating witnesses, cooperating

individuals, and other persons who have personal knowledge and experience regarding the amassing, spending, transportation, distribution and concealment of records and proceeds of trafficking in controlled substances.

- d. Before joining CRAA, I was a Deputy Sheriff in Morrow County, Ohio for three years. I was a Police Officer in Bellville, Ohio for four years and a Police officer with CRAA for 18 Years. During the course of my career as a Police Officer, I have participated in numerous investigations involving Felony cases and search warrants.

3. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other agents and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to show that there is sufficient evidence for issuance of a criminal complaint and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter.

PROBABLE CAUSE

4. At approximately 4:12 am on Friday, January 9, 2026, a call was made to 911 in Columbus, Ohio regarding an individual, later learned to be GRIFFITH, who was trespassing in a construction area at John Glenn International Airport located in Columbus, Ohio. Law enforcement responded to the scene and arrested Griffith.

5. GRIFFITH was convicted in 2011 of a crime punishable by imprisonment for more than a year, making him ineligible under federal law to possess a firearm. On or about June 27, 2011, in case number 10 CR I 12 0609, GRIFFITH was sentenced to three years of incarceration after he pled guilty to kidnapping, in violation of Ohio R.C. § 2905.01(A)(3), a second-degree felony.

6. Law enforcement had found GRIFFITH in a secured construction zone on airport property. There were signs prohibiting trespassing, such as “Keep Out” and “Construction Site, Keep Out, No Visitors Beyond This Point,” outside the area. There was also a fence around the area. An entry gate to the fence was locked but investigators later learned that there was a gap in the fence large enough for a person to fit through the gate.

7. At the time of his apprehension, GRIFFITH was dressed in what appeared to be an Army combat uniform. He was also wearing body armor with ceramic plates. GRIFFITH was also wearing a ballistic helmet with night-vision monocular attached.

8. Law enforcement provided GRIFFITH with *Miranda* warnings. GRIFFITH indicated to law enforcement that he had placed firearms in a bathroom of a construction trailer within the secured fence of the construction area. GRIFFITH also indicated that he had firearms in his vehicle. Law enforcement located the trailer and located firearms inside. Law enforcement also located GRIFFITH’s vehicle parked nearby and located firearms in it, as well.¹

9. In all, law enforcement located four firearms, including a suppressed, semi-automatic AK style rifle, a shortened 12-gauge shotgun, and two handguns in the bathroom of the aforementioned trailer. Law enforcement also located numerous amounts of ammunition. The AK-47 was loaded with ammunition, including a round of 7.62x39 ammunition marked Belom 24.

¹ In an affidavit for a prior filing, I mistakenly indicated that firearms were all located in the trailer, whereas I now understand that some firearms were located in the trailer and some in the vehicle.

10. Belom's website indicates that it is an ammunition factory and is based out of Serbia. Furthermore, the website of an U.S.-based ammunition retailer, AmmoToGo.com, indicates that Belom ammunition is manufactured in Serbia.

11. Of the four firearms, the make, model and serial numbers of the four firearms were either removed or painted over. Identifying marks are not visible on any of the four recovered firearms.

12. GRIFFITH was later transported to an interview room.

13. FBI investigators met with GRIFFITH. They advised GRIFFITH that his *Miranda* warnings still applied. GRIFFITH stated he understood and wanted to talk with FBI. During the interview with FBI investigators, GRIFFITH stated that he owned the four weapons and explained to law enforcement where he obtained the weapons.

14. GRIFFITH said for approximately three to four days prior to coming to the airport, he heard voices telling him to go to the Columbus Airport and "meet someone" at the construction gate where he was found to have entered. GRIFFITH admitted to being a felon and knowing that it was illegal for him to be in possession of any firearm. When asked about how long he has had the firearms and other equipment, he stated he had had them for a while now. He said that he would purchase firearms from various people and at various locations.

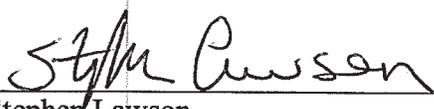
15. GRIFFITH said he has PTSD from his time in the United States Army and serving three deployments in Iraq. GRIFFITH was shot in the neck while in Iraq during the third deployment.

16. Columbus, Ohio is in the Southern District of Ohio, Eastern Division.

CONCLUSION

17. Based upon the above facts and circumstances, I submit that there is probable cause to believe that on January 9, 2026, William T. GRIFFITH III violated 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1), that is, possession of a firearm or ammunition by a prohibited person.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Lawson
Task Force Officer
FBI JTTF

Subscribed and sworn to me on January 14, 2026



Elizabeth A. Preston Deavers
United States Magistrate Judge

