



**United States Attorney
Southern District of New York**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**SULLIVAN COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF CHARGED IN EXTORTION PLOT
RELATING TO FALSE THREAT THAT AN INDIVIDUAL WAS
TARGETED BY ORGANIZED CRIME**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced the arrest today of PHILIP ETKIN, a Sullivan County Deputy Sheriff, on a charge that ETKIN attempted to extort \$3,500 from an individual in Middletown, New York.

According to court proceedings and an Indictment that was unsealed in White Plains federal court this afternoon, ETKIN told an individual in Middletown that a contract to kill the victim had been issued by a high-ranking member of the Genovese crime family and that ETKIN had negotiated with organized crime figures to pay \$3,500 to withdraw the threat to kill the victim.

The FBI investigated this purported murder contract and found no evidence to substantiate ETKIN's claims that this high-ranking member of the Genovese crime family exists.

ETKIN was arraigned before United States Magistrate Judge MARK D. FOX and was released on bail with electronic monitoring.

If convicted, ETKIN faces a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative efforts and cooperation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Sullivan County Sheriff's Department.

The charge contained in the Indictment is merely

an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Assistant United States Attorney JOHN P. COLLINS, JR is in charge of the prosecution.

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