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Contact Kylie Mason

Phone (850) 245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Another Retail Theft Ring Shut Down by Attorney General Moody's Florida Organized Retail Crime Exchange Taskforce



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is announcing another shutdown of a retail-theft crime ring by the Florida Organized Retail Crime Exchange taskforce. A Pinellas County pastor, Robert Dell, is facing charges for operating a multimillion-dollar theft ring stealing from The Home Depot. Authorities arrested Dell and four other associates for stealing merchandise worth more than $1.4 million from home improvement stores across multiple counties and then selling the items from an eBay account.

Attorney General Moody launched the FORCE taskforce to fight back against organized retail theft and prevent lawlessness seen in major cities Los Angeles and New York City from taking root in Florida. This case is another successful example due to the implementation of FORCE. Since 2019, Attorney General Moody's Statewide Prosecutors have filed more than 90 cases and charged more than 300 defendants in cases involving organized retail theft. The Office of Statewide Prosecution has a nearly 100% conviction rate for organized retail theft cases.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Due to the success of FORCE, another retail theft crime ring is dismantled, and our Statewide Prosecutors continue to file charges against

organized retail thieves. This pastor clearly skipped over the commandment—thou shall not steal. Our FORCE taskforce shut down his criminal operation stealing millions of dollars worth of merchandise from Home Depot stores across the state to resell the items on eBay. We will not tolerate organized retail theft in Florida and my office will continue to combat these criminal organizations."

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Wilton Simpson said, "I'm proud of our Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement making these arrests and ending a years-long organized crime spree. While some progressive states may look the other way or pursue reduced charges for retail theft, this operation sends a clear message that Florida is relentless in our pursuit of justice and will not tolerate this criminal activity. I appreciate the investigators and law enforcement personnel who worked tirelessly on this case, as well as our partners at the Office of Statewide Prosecution and The Home Depot. Together, we will continue to pursue a safer and more secure Florida for all its residents and visitors."

Dell is the former pastor of The Rock Church and former director of a halfway house serving those recovering from drug addiction in St. Petersburg. The FORCE Taskforce, working with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement found Pastor Dell worked with four accomplices to shoplift Milwaukee, DeWalt and other branded products from Home Depot stores throughout the counties of Citrus, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sarasota.

Co-conspirators, Daniel Mace and Jessica Wild, stole the majority of the merchandise and, on average, victimized stores five to six times a day. The co-conspirators then delivered the merchandise to Pastor Dell's house to be sold under the eBay store name: "Anointed Liquidator." According to the investigation, Dell demanded the crimes under threat of abuse and used the positions of being a former pastor and former director of a hallway house to manipulate other vulnerable people to participate in the criminal scheme. Home Depot suspects Dell operated this scheme for more than 10 years, resulting in the loss of more than $5 million.

Authorities also identified Jaclyn Dell, Robert Dell's wife and Karen Dell, Robert Dell's mother, as conspirators, assisting in the collection, shipment and payment of the stolen goods. Jaclyn Dell faces a charge of conspiracy to RICO and Karen Dell is charged with dealing in stolen property.

Pastor Dell faces charges of racketeering, conspiracy to commit racketeering and dealing in stolen property as an organizer, all felonies. OSP will handle these cases.

Attorney General Moody is committed to combating organized retail fraud. In December 2021, Attorney General Moody launched FORCE, a statewide task force and database to help spot trends, identify subjects and take down massive, organized retail-theft rings. FORCE also bridges the gap between law enforcement, prosecutors and retailers to work together and share information on theft incidents statewide. In 2022, Attorney General Moody fought for legislation to help Florida prosecutors dismantle organized retail-theft rings and provide more tools to prosecute members of organized retail-theft rings.

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