



San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

NEWS RELEASE

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Thanksgiving I-15 Gridlock Prankster Admits Fault *Ordered to Pay Restitution to Public Safety Agencies*

San Diego, CA: City Attorney Jan Goldsmith announced that a San Diego man whose prank phone call shut down a major highway and inconvenienced drivers for three hours on Thanksgiving admitted violating the law and was ordered to pay more than \$8,000.00 in restitution to local public safety agencies.

On Thanksgiving Day 2013, Victor Manuel Diaz called his younger sister twice as she was driving on Interstate 15, heading to a family gathering in Escondido. Disguising his voice, Diaz said there was a bomb in her car and it was about to explode. Diaz's sister pulled over to the center divider on northbound I-15, near Miramar Way and called 911. After the police determined there was no bomb in the vehicle, Diaz was called to the scene for questioning and arrested for the bomb hoax.

Upon receiving the police report, the City Attorney's office investigated Diaz and discovered he was on probation for a domestic violence conviction and decided to pursue revocation of probation. The City Attorney's request came before Superior Court Judge Polly H. Shamoon on March 7, 2014, with Chief Deputy City Attorney Mark Skeels as prosecutor. Defendant Diaz admitted that he failed to remain law abiding, in violation of the terms of his probation in domestic violence case number M137711DV (domestic violence battery and violating a restraining order in 2011). Specifically, Diaz admitted that by placing a call to his sister in a disguised voice and claiming that he had planted a bomb in her vehicle that he violated Penal Code sections 148.3 (False Report of Emergency), 148.1 (False Report of Secretion of Explosive), and 422 (Criminal Threats).

Judge Shamoon formally revoked Diaz's probation and reinstated it on the following terms: sentenced him to 9 days in custody, 20 days of public work service and extended his term of probation two additional years to March 2016. Further, Defendant Diaz was ordered to pay restitution of \$3,864.00 to the California Highway Patrol, \$3,406.61 to the San Diego Police Department, and \$1,029.29 to the San Diego Fire Department, for total restitution of \$8,299.90 for their costs associated with the bomb hoax.

City Attorney Jan Goldsmith stated: **"Bomb threats are no joke and, in fact, violate the law. Thankfully, this time no one was hurt, although thousands of people spent hours on Thanksgiving gridlocked on the freeway and police and firefighters were diverted from legitimate emergencies. Our prosecutors achieved a terrific outcome, both holding Diaz accountable and requiring him to pay back more than \$8,000 to first responders for the costs of dealing with this hoax."**

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