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Contact: Leslie Wolf Branscomb at
lawolf@sandiego.gov or (619) 533-5896

Hate Crime Suspect Facing Additional Charges *Second Victim Battered by Ocean Beach Man*

The City Attorney's Office announced today that additional charges will be filed against Roger Stefan Witthoef, Jr., who awaits trial in a racial hate crime case in which he battered an SDG&E worker.

Witthoef, 33, will be arraigned in San Diego Superior Court May 6 on new charges of battery and vandalism, involving an attack on another man on January 13, 2022.

In the new case, Witthoef confronted a man on Muir Avenue in Ocean Beach who was helping a disabled friend out of a car. Witthoef was walking down the sidewalk when he apparently became angry that the vehicle was obstructing their path.

According to the evidence, Witthoef blocked the victim as he tried to walk around the car. When the victim tried to push past Witthoef, Witthoef struck him, knocking him to the ground. He then stomped on the victim's phone and broke it. Audio of the incident was captured on a neighbor's security system.

The victim in this case contacted the City Attorney's Office after reading news coverage of Witthoef's hate crime case in which he battered and verbally abused an SDG&E worker using racial epithets.

"Mr. Witthoef's disdain for those who are different from him because of their nationality or disability is reprehensible," City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **"Our community members, visitors, and those who work in our neighborhoods have the right to be free from acts of violence. This Office will fight hard to hold Mr. Witthoef accountable."**

In the first case, Witthoef was charged with battery with a hate crime allegation, stemming from his confrontation with an SDG&E worker in Point Loma Heights on September 15, 2021. In that incident, Witthoef was apparently enraged that his pickup truck's path was halted at the intersection of Voltaire Street and Mendocino Boulevard where SDG&E workers were repairing a utility box.

The SDG&E worker's job was to block the road and divert traffic. Witthoef reportedly slapped the victim on the head, knocking off his hard hat, and told the victim (who is Latino) to "talk in English you f---ing immigrant" and "go back to your country."

Witthoeft was arraigned in that case on March 1 on charges of committing battery, with a hate crime enhancement, and violating the victim's constitutional rights by threat of force. Trial is scheduled for June. Witthoeft is not in custody at this time.

Anyone with information about either of these incidents, or about any additional incidents, is encouraged to contact the City Attorney's Office at (619) 533-5661 or CityAttorney@san Diego.gov.

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