

STATEMENT OF FACTS
IN SUPPORT OF
APPLICATION FOR CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

APPLICATION NO. (court use only)

PAGE

1 OF 9

Trial Court of Massachusetts
District Court Department

The undersigned alleges the following as a ☐ full or ☐ partial statement
of the factual basis for the offense(s) for which a criminal complaint is sought.

COURT DIVISION

CENTRAL BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COU
24 WENDELL AVE
PITTSFIELD, MA. 01201

1. On Friday October 9, 2020 at 6:42 P.M., Officers Bradley, Duryea and myself were dispatched to the area of North Street at Holiday Farm for a report of hay bails on fire. Upon arriving I observed multiple hay bails on fire within 50 feet of the roadway. I began to block traffic at Cleveland Rd and radioed Officer Bradley to block traffic north of my location at a bypass location. This effectively rerouted traffic and allowed the responding fire trucks full use of the roadway. Upon Officer Duryea reaching my location, he assumed control of the detour and I relocated to the fire scene to speak with the Assistant Fire Chief.
2. At the fire scene, I located the owner of Holiday Farm, James Dicken Crane. Mr. Crane informed me that the hay bails had been picked up earlier in the week and that earlier in the day, the hay bails were stacked and painted into a political sign supporting presidential candidate Biden. He estimated the value of the burned hay to be about \$2,000. Mr. Crane stated he was working across the street with Peter Barden and one minute the hay bails were fine and then he turned around and they were fully engulfed in flame. He did not see anyone around the hay bails. He did have a picture which was given to him by one of his employees showing a brown substance thrown on the sign minutes before it was on fire (See attached photo). Mr. Crane stated that the hay bails were not dry and freshly cut with a lot of moisture within. Mr. Crane believed that the fire was set.
3. I spoke with the Assistant Fire Chief, Chris Cachet and he equally felt that the fire was most likely set as the conditions didn't favor spontaneous combustion. I then contacted B Troop headquarters of the MA State Police

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

PRINTED NAME

FURLONG, CHRISTOPHER

SIGNATURE

X *Chris Furlong*

I AM A:

☒ LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

☐ CIVILIAN COMPLAINANT OR WITNESS

DATE SIGNED

13 Oct 20

ADDITIONAL FACTS FOUND BY CLERK-MAGISTRATE / ASST. CLERK / JUDGE BASED ON ORAL TESTIMONY

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to have a fire marshal respond to the scene.

4. While waiting at the fire scene, I was approached by Karen and Mark Bean. They wanted to report to me the
following:

a. They spoke with an intoxicated white male, around 6' tall, with short reddish/brown hair, wearing an orange
hoodie and a hat at the Food Mart in Dalton around 5:30 P.M.

b. This person told them that his 24 year old son had recently died in a motorcycle accident out of state and that
he was going to light the hay bails at Holiday Farm on fire.

c. They also believed that this person had come from Paddy's restaurant and walked back to that location.

I realized that the person they were describing may be Lonnie Durfee who recently had a son, Jacob Durfee, die in a
motorcycle accident in New Jersey. I was familiar with Mr. Durfee from speaking with him on September 22, 2020 when
he dialed 911 while intoxicated to complain about the Pittsfield Police Department (See call # 20-13772). I also
knew that Mr. Durfee was living about 1 mile from the fire scene on Home Terrace. At this time, I contacted SGT
Powell to come in and go to the Food Mart and Paddy's to speak with the managers for surveillance video. I also

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informed SGT Powell that Lonnie Durfee may be a suspect:

5. I then received a call from dispatch informing me that Deolinda Paulo of #2 Home Terrace was requesting to speak with an officer regarding the fire. I contacted Ms. Paulo using my cruiser cell phone and she stated to me the following;

a. a neighbor named Lonnie was over several weeks ago for dinner. The rules of the dinner was that no politics were to be discussed;

b. Lonnie is a vocal supporter of President Trump and proceeded to make a huge scene during the dinner related to politics.

c. Her fiancée ended up getting into a confrontation with Lonnie and asking him to leave.

Ms. Paulo also stated that her neighbor had seen some troubling things from Lonnie and was with her at this time. I asked if I could speak with her neighbor. Her neighbor took the phone and identified herself as Katrina Christiana.

6. Ms. Christiana resides at #9 Home Terrace and stated to me the following:

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a. Two sundays ago she observed Lonnie burning a Biden campaign sign in the yard of #12 Home Terrace. The home is currently unoccupied and for sale. After the fire went out, Lonnie stuck an American Flag on top of the ashes. She believes that the sign remnants are still in the yard covered by the leaves.

b. This evening her husband, Mark Christiana, observed Lonnie placing something into his truck and leave. He was then observed returning a short time later at a high rate of speed by Mark's coworker and parked in the driveway at #12 Home Terrace. Mark also observed Lonnie burning the Biden campaign sign in the yard of #12 Home Terrace two sundays prior. (On Sunday October 11, I spoke to Mark Christiana and confirmed this information).

7. I was then contacted by an off duty Dalton Police Officer Bustin Buzzella, who told me the following;

a. Around 6:45 P.M., he observed a yellow pick up truck leave Cumberland Farms after filling gas cans;

b. The vehicle took a left and headed towards North Street;

c. When leaving, a gas can fell out of the truck and was left on Main St.

A check of the RMV showed Mr. Durfee owned a 2004 GMC Sierra Pick Up Truck which is yellow in color.

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

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8. I was then advised by dispatch to contact Mike Cyrulik of Savoy regarding a suspicious vehicle around the hay
bails at 6:45 P.M. I contacted Mr. Cyrulik using my department issued cell phone. He reported to me the following:

a. he and his girlfriend observed a vehicle with one occupant parked behind the hay bails;

b. he described it as a dark colored older model Jeep Cherokee.

I later spoke again with Mr. Crane and Mr. Barden who told me that the employee which took the picture of the hay
bails with the brown substance on it around 6:45 P.M. drove a dark colored Ford SUV, smaller than an Explorer and
possibly a Ford Escape.

9. Trooper Mazza from the State Fire Marshal's office arrived at the scene. I updated him on the information that
I had obtained. We were then joined by SGT Powell, who informed us of the following:

a. The clerk at the Food Mart knew Lonnie Durfee and stated he was there around 5:30 P.M.

b. The bartender at Paddy's provided a written statement in which Lonnie Durfee was overheard telling other

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customers that he was going to burn the Biden/Harris sign down across from Holiday Farm;

c. Video footage at Cumberland Farms would not be available until the morning.

10. At 8:42 P.M., Trooper Mazza, SGT Powell, and myself then proceeded to Home Terrace to speak with Lonnie

Durfee. Upon arrival, we located Mr. Durfee next to his truck parked in the driveway of #12 Home Terrace. Mr.

Durfee was wearing an orange hoodie shirt. I informed Mr. Durfee of why we were there and Trooper Mazza asked if he could speak with him. Mr. Durfee agreed to speak with us. Mr. Durfee sat on the tailgate of his pick up truck and

had a cigarette while he and Trooper Mazza spoke. Mr. Durfee was clearly intoxicated at the time of our discussion.

The following is a summary of our conversation;

a. He is distraught over the death of his son Jacob;

b. He has been drinking heavily to cope with the loss;

c. He works at the Otis Granite Quarry;

d. He is frustrated with the Democratic and political left agenda and believes they are ruining the country;

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e. He admitted to setting the hay bails on fire and did so because he disagrees with the political stance it represented;

f. He used old motor oil and gasoline to set the fire;

g. He never intended to harm a person or damage any property with this act;

h. He admitted to burying a Biden sign in the yard at #12 Home Terrace.

Mr. Durfee had several cigarettes during the conversation. He was very cooperative and supportive of law enforcement. At one point, he stopped the discussion to show us photographs of his son growing up and talk about the pictures. He then continued with the discussion. He never requested to stop speaking with us or to leave the area. Mr. Durfee offered to allow us to view pictures on his cellular phone and went and got the phone from his parents front porch. I was able to observe pictures of the hay bails at Holiday Farm on his phone and other pictures of Mr. Durfee burning political signs. Mr. Durfee agreed to go inside his parents house and go to bed. He also agreed to come to the police station at 10 A.M. in the morning to speak again with Trooper Mazza.

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

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11. On Saturday October 10, 2020 at 9:48 A.M., Lonnie Durfee came to the Dalton Police Station to speak with Trooper Mazza. Officer Buzzella sat in on the interview as well. This interview was audio/video recorded and Mr. Durfee was read his Miranda Rights at the beginning of the interview. Mr. Durfee admitted to using gasoline and oil to set the hay bails on fire. Mr. Durfee was apologetic for his actions and offered to pay for the damage he caused. (See Interview DVD & Report from Officer Buzzella). Mr. Durfee was placed under arrest following the interview.

12. Based on the facts and circumstances of the case, probable cause exists to charge Lonnie Durfee with the following;

M.G.L. Ch 265 S5/A Burn Personalty

a. Mr. Durfee admitted to setting fire to the hay bails at Holiday Cottage Farm using motor oil and gasoline;

b. The value of the hay bails is estimated to be \$2,000;

Respectfully Submitted,

Ch. Furlong, SGT

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

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X *Ch. Furlong*

IAMA:

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Christopher J. Furlong, Sergeant, Dalton Police Department

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