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DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney's Office  
District of Oregon

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### **Cottage Grove Woman Indicted for Posting Violent Threat Online**

EUGENE, Ore.—A federal grand jury in Eugene returned an indictment Thursday charging a Cottage Grove, Oregon, woman with posting a violent threat online, announced the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon.

Elizabeth Ballesteros West, 56, has been charged with one count of transmitting an interstate threat.

According to court documents, in late September 2023, the FBI received an anonymous tip that West was threatening coworkers on Facebook. Later, in November 2023, the FBI learned West had established an account on X (formerly known as Twitter) that she was allegedly using to post and repost memes, videos and statements containing violent messages targeting Black and Jewish people and immigrants. Several of West's posts included what appeared to be self-produced photos of firearms including several handguns, a shotgun, and an AR-style assault rifle.

On January 3, 2023, West admitted to posting and reposting messages on X that contained hateful and violent rhetoric. West also admitted to possessing multiple shotguns and AR-15 assault rifles at her Cottage Grove residence.

One week later, on January 9, 2023, the FBI executed federal search warrants on West's person, vehicle, and residence. They located and seized 12 handguns, 16 rifles, thousands of rounds of ammunition and firearm accessories, and a journal that appeared to contain writings and drawings that included additional hateful and violent statements. On January 12, 2023, FBI agents arrested West without incident at her workplace in Eugene.

West made her first appearance in federal court Thursday before a U.S. Magistrate Judge and was ordered detained pending further court proceedings.

This case was investigated by the FBI with assistance from the Cottage Grove Police Department, Eugene Police Department, and Lane County Sheriff's Office. It is being prosecuted by Adam E. Delph, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

An indictment is only an accusation of a crime, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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