

STATE GRAND JURY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,)	Case No: <u>2021-GS-47-28</u>
)	
)	
)	
v.)	INDICTMENT FOR
)	OBTAINING SIGNATURE OR PROPERTY
)	BY FALSE PRETENSES,
)	MONEY LAUNDERING, AND
)	COMPUTER CRIME
RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH,)	
)	
Defendant.)	
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At a session of the State Grand Jury of South Carolina, convened in Columbia, South Carolina, on November 18, 2021, the State Grand Jurors present upon their oath and charge as follows:

COUNT ONE
OBTAINING SIGNATURE OR PROPERTY BY FALSE PRETENSES
VALUE \$10,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. §16-13-240(1)
CDR Code: 3471

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH did, in Bamberg County, on or about March 10, 2021, by false pretenses or representation obtain the signature of a person to a written instrument and money or other property from another person, with the intent to cheat or defraud that person of money or property, to wit:

MURDAUGH convinced an attorney from another firm with which he was associated on a case to write a \$192,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of legal fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED).

To that end, MURDAUGH told the attorney that he was going to structure his fees in part because of possible civil liability in a case involving a boat crash in which a young woman died. MURDAUGH also told the attorney that had had made PMPED aware of this and he would put the fees "on the books". In reality, MURDAUGH had not informed PMPED and was bypassing paying the fees into the firm as was required, and MURDAUGH did not structure the fees. MURDAUGH instead deposited the check on or about March 10, 2021, and used this money for his own personal use, for expenses including but not limited to credit card payments, family expenses, and checks written to family, associates, and a law partner.

All in violation of section 16-13-240 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT TWO
MONEY LAUNDERING
VALUE \$100,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. §35-11-740
CDR Code: 3939**

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH, in Bamberg County, between on or about March 10, 2021 and on or about May 15, 2021, did conduct financial transactions with property that he knew was the proceeds of, or was derived directly or indirectly from the proceeds of, unlawful activity, and he conducted these transactions with the intent to promote the carrying on of unlawful activity, and while knowing that the transactions were designed in whole or in part to conceal or disguise the nature, location, sources, ownership, or control of the proceeds of unlawful activity, to wit:

MURDAUGH convinced an attorney from another firm with which he was associated on a case to write a \$192,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of legal fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED). He falsely told the attorney that he was going to structure the fees and that PMPED was aware of what he was doing. Instead, MURDAUGH deposited the check on or about March 10, 2021, and engaged in financial transactions to convert the money to personal use, including withdrawing cash, making online transfers, and writing checks to family and associates. These transactions exceeded \$100,000 in a twelve month period.

All in violation of section 35-11-740 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving

a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

COUNT THREE
OBTAINING SIGNATURE OR PROPERTY BY FALSE PRETENSES
VALUE \$10,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. §16-13-240(1)
CDR Code: 3471

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH did, in Bamberg County, on or about March 10, 2021, by false pretenses or representation obtain the signature of a person to a written instrument and money or other property from another person, with the intent to cheat or defraud that person of money or property, to wit:

MURDAUGH convinced an attorney from another firm with which he was associated on a case to write a \$375,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of legal fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED). To that end, MURDAUGH told the attorney that he was going to structure his fees in part because of possible civil liability in a case involving a boat crash in which a young woman died. MURDAUGH also told the attorney that had had made PMPED aware of this and he would put the fees "on the books". In reality, MURDAUGH had not informed PMPED and was bypassing paying the fees into the firm as was required, and MURDAUGH did not structure the fees. MURDAUGH instead deposited the check on or about March 23,

2021, and used this money for his own personal use, for expenses including but not limited to credit card payments, family expenses, and checks written to family, associates, and a law partner.

All in violation of section 16-13-240 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT FOUR
MONEY LAUNDERING
VALUE \$100,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. §35-11-740
CDR Code: 3939**

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH, in Bamberg County, between on or about March 23, 2021 and on or about May 15, 2021, did conduct financial transactions with property that he knew was the proceeds of, or was derived directly or indirectly from the proceeds of, unlawful activity, and he conducted these transactions with the intent to promote the carrying on of unlawful activity, and while knowing that the transactions were designed in whole or in part to conceal or disguise the nature, location, sources, ownership, or control of the proceeds of unlawful activity, to wit:

MURDAUGH convinced an attorney from another firm with which he was

associated on a case to write a \$375,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of legal fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED). He falsely told the attorney that he was going to structure the fees and that PMPED was aware of what he was doing. Instead, MURDAUGH deposited the check on or about March 23, 2021, and engaged in financial transactions to convert the money to personal use, including withdrawing cash, making online transfers, and writing checks to family and associates. These transactions exceeded \$100,000 in a twelve month period.

All in violation of section 35-11-740 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

COUNT FIVE
OBTAINING SIGNATURE OR PROPERTY BY FALSE PRETENSES
VALUE \$10,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. §16-13-240(1)
CDR Code: 3471

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH did, in Bamberg County, on or about March 10, 2021, by false pretenses or representation obtain the signature of a person to a written instrument and money or other property from another person, with the intent to

cheat or defraud that person of money or property, to wit:

MURDAUGH convinced an attorney from another firm with which he was associated on a case to write a \$225,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of legal fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED). To that end, MURDAUGH told the attorney that he was going to structure his fees in part because of possible civil liability in a case involving a boat crash in which a young woman died. MURDAUGH also told the attorney that had had made PMPED aware of this and he would put the fees "on the books". In reality, MURDAUGH had not informed PMPED and was bypassing paying the fees into the firm as was required, and MURDAUGH did not structure the fees. MURDAUGH instead deposited the check on or about April 20, 2021, and used this money for his own personal use, for expenses including but not limited to credit card payments, family expenses, and checks written to family, associates, and a law partner.

All in violation of section 16-13-240 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT SIX
MONEY LAUNDERING
VALUE \$100,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. §35-11-740
CDR Code: 3939**

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH, in Bamberg County, between on or about April 20, 2021 and on or about May 15, 2021, did conduct financial transactions with property that he knew was the proceeds of, or was derived directly or indirectly from the proceeds of, unlawful activity, and he conducted these transactions with the intent to promote the carrying on of unlawful activity, and while knowing that the transactions were designed in whole or in part to conceal or disguise the nature, location, sources, ownership, or control of the proceeds of unlawful activity, to wit:

MURDAUGH convinced an attorney from another firm with which he was associated on a case to write a \$225,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of legal fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED). He falsely told the attorney that he was going to structure the fees and that PMPED was aware of what he was doing. Instead, MURDAUGH deposited the check on or about April 20, 2021, and engaged in financial transactions to convert the money to personal use, including withdrawing cash, making online transfers, and writing checks to family and associates. These transactions exceeded \$100,000 in a twelve month period.

All in violation of section 35-11-740 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving

a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT SEVEN
OBTAINING SIGNATURE OR PROPERTY BY FALSE PRETENSES
VALUE \$10,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. §16-13-240(1)
CDR Code: 3471**

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH did, in Bamberg County, on or about July 14, 2021 until on or about July 19, 2021, by false pretenses or representation obtain the signature of a person to a written instrument and money or other property from another person, with the intent to cheat or defraud that person of money or property, to wit:

MURDAUGH had convinced an attorney from another firm with which he was associated on a case to write three checks totaling \$792,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of legal fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED). To that end, MURDAUGH falsely told the attorney that he was going to structure his fees in part because of possible civil liability in a case involving a boat crash in which a young woman died. MURDAUGH also falsely told the attorney that had had made PMPED aware of this and he would put the fees "on the books". Once staff at PMPED started to make inquiries to the other attorney and MURDAUGH about

disbursement of the legal fees, MURDAUGH told the attorney from another firm that he needed to return the \$792,000 to the other attorney's trust account for redispbursement to PMPED. MURDAUGH justified this to the other attorney by falsely claiming he had to do this because he had not set up the structure of the fees correctly, but in reality he had converted and spent the funds for personal use. MURDAUGH only wired \$600,000 back to the other attorney, and MURDAUGH falsely claimed to the attorney that he could not access the other \$192,000 "because of the way he had it set up". MURDAUGH made such a false representation knowing full well the other attorney would have to deposit \$192,000 of his own funds to equalize his trust account.

To that end, MURDAUGH told the attorney that he was going to structure his fees in part because of possible civil liability in a case involving a boat crash in which a young woman died. MURDAUGH also told the attorney that had had made PMPED aware of this and he would put the fees "on the books". In reality, MURDAUGH had not informed PMPED and was bypassing paying the fees into the firm as was required, and MURDAUGH did not structure the fees. MURDAUGH instead deposited the check on or about April 20, 2021, and used this money for his own personal use, for expenses including but not limited to credit card payments, family expenses, and checks written to family, associates, and a law partner.

All in violation of section 16-13-240 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime

involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

**COUNT EIGHT
COMPUTER CRIME
VALUE MORE THAN \$10,000
S.C. Code Ann. §16-16-20
CDR Code: 3110**

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH, in Bamberg County, between on or about March 10, 2021 and on or about May 15, 2021, did wilfully, knowingly, maliciously, and without authorization and for an unauthorized purpose, directly or indirectly access or cause to be accessed a computer, computer system, or computer network for the purpose of: devising or executing a scheme or artifice to defraud; obtaining money, property, or services by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, promises; and committing any crime; to wit:

MURDAUGH induced an attorney from another firm with which he was associated on a case to write a \$192,000 check, a \$375,000 check, and a \$225,000 check for MURDAUGH's share of the fees to him personally rather than following the normal practice of writing the check to MURDAUGH's law firm, Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED). He falsely told the attorney that he was going to structure the fees and that PMPED was aware of what he was doing. Instead, MURDAUGH made online transfers to convert part of this money to the personal use of himself and his family. These transactions exceeded \$10,000.

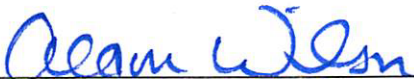
All in violation of section 16-16-20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and such conduct involving a violation of the South Carolina Anti-Money Laundering Act, or a crime related to a violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, and such conduct also involving a crime involving computer crimes, or a conspiracy or solicitation to commit a crime involving computer crimes, and such conduct having not been authorized by law.

Against the peace and dignity of this State and contrary to the law in such case made and provided.

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ALAN WILSON (scw)
ATTORNEY GENERAL