



*United States Attorney
District of New Jersey*

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**MORRIS COUNTY, N.J., MAN – FORMER POLICE OFFICER – CHARGED WITH
ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT DEBTS BY EXTORTION**

NEWARK, N.J. – A former Passaic police officer and organized crime associate from Morris County, N.J., appeared in Newark federal court today on charges he attempted to collect a debt by extortion, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Stefano Mazzola, 68, of Rockaway, is charged in a Complaint with one count of using extortion to collect or attempt to collect a debt and to punish a person for non-repayment of a debt. Mazzola appeared this afternoon before U.S. Magistrate Judge Madeline Cox Arleo and was detained.

According to the criminal Complaint:

In 2012, the victim obtained a loan of \$30,000 from an individual, who subsequently transferred the loan to Mazzola. The victim periodically made payments on the loan to Mazzola. In late 2012, Mazzola began to threaten that if the victim did not repay the loan, he would physically harm the victim.

The victim made a number of consensually recorded phone calls to Mazzola, during which Mazzola threatened the victim. During a phone call on Jan. 17, 2013, Mazzola acknowledged that an individual had transferred the loan to him, stating: "He gave me that debt, I've paid out \$20-something-thousand, if not more, for him."

Later in the conversation, Mazzola threatened the victim. "Let me explain something to ya, and I really mean this, and I don't care who is listening to my phone or not, if I want to do something to ya, I don't give a f--k if you give me a million dollars. If I'm looking to hurt ya, I'll take the money and still hurt ya. It has nothing to do with it," Mazzola said.

On another call that occurred on Jan. 23, 2013, the victim told Mazzola: "You know you're gonna get paid." In response, Mazzola said: "You say you know I'm gonna get paid, I don't believe nothing. .. If I write it off in my head, it doesn't matter. Because I'm a firm believer in time. ... But listen, I know what I'm gonna do. 'Cause it doesn't matter to me. It don't matter whether it's now or ten years from now. It don't matter. You don't understand. You just don't know me. I don't give a f--k if an agent is listening."

The charge of extortionate collection of a debt is punishable by a maximum potential penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge David Velazquez in Newark, and the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor, under the direction of Commissioner Jan Gilhooly, with the investigation that led to today's charges.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lisa M. Colone of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Newark.

The charge and allegations contained in the Complaint are merely accusations and the defendant is considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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Defense counsel: Miles Feinstein Esq., Clifton, N.J.