

STATE GRAND JURY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
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)
)
v.)
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RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH,)
)
)
Defendant.)
_____)

Case No. 2021-GS-47-38

**INDICTMENT FOR BREACH OF TRUST
WITH FRAUDULENT INTENT, MONEY
LAUNDERING, AND COMPUTER CRIME**

At a session of the State Grand Jury of South Carolina, convened in Columbia, South Carolina, on December 9, 2021, the State Grand Jurors present upon their oath and charge as follows:

**COUNT ONE
BREACH OF TRUST WITH FRAUDULENT INTENT
VALUE \$10,000 OR MORE
S.C. Code Ann. § 16-13-230
CDR Code: 3424**

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH, in Colleton County, on or about November 30, 2020, did willfully, unlawfully, and feloniously convert to his own use, with intention to permanently deprive the owner of possession, goods to which he had been entrusted by the owner for the care, keeping, and possession, to wit:

While relying on his prestige and reputation as a lawyer, and the trust of the personal representative of the Estate of Sandra Taylor, who had come to MURDAUGH for help, MURDAUGH did convince the personal representative that the total wrongful death recovery would only be \$30,000 and that MURDAUGH was not even going to take

a fee because the recovery was so low. Instead of paying any money at all into the Estate from a recovery of over \$180,000, MURDAUGH paid his legal fees and some minor expenses and then caused an "Estate of Sandra Taylor Settlement Proceeds" check for \$152,866 and made out to "Forge" to be disbursed from the Peters, Murdaugh, Parker, Eltzroth, and Detrick, P.A. (PMPED) Client Trust Account. Forge Consulting, LLC, is a legitimate company often used by South Carolina lawyers to facilitate structured settlements. However, MURDAUGH then deposited the \$152,866 "Estate of Sandra Taylor Settlement Proceeds" check – which was supposed to be compensation to the Estate of Sandra Taylor for her wrongful death -- into a bank account he had created under the name "Richard A Murdaugh Sole Prop DBA Forge". MURDAUGH had created this bank account for the purpose of misappropriating funds belonging to others with the illusion that the money was being paid to the legitimate company Forge Consulting, LLC. Instead of compensating the Estate, MURDAUGH instead breached the personal representative's trust and converted the money to his own personal use, for expenses including but not limited to a credit card payment, cash, payments to family, and checks written to associates.

All in violation of section 16-13-230 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 Colleton County, between on or about November 30, 2020 and on or about December 21, 2020, 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 created a bank account under the name "Richard A Murdaugh Sole Prop DBA Forge". He created this account for the purpose of misappropriating funds belonging to others with the illusion that the money was being paid to the legitimate settlement planning company Forge Consulting, LLC. MURDAUGH caused a \$152,866 settlement disbursement check, which represented proceeds intended for the benefit of the Estate of Sandra Taylor, to be made out to "Forge". He deposited the check into the Forge account under his control, and then conducted financial transactions including online banking transfers and cash withdrawals to convert the \$152,866 to his own personal use. 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
COMPUTER CRIME
VALUE MORE THAN \$10,000
S.C. Code Ann. § 16-16-20
CDR Code: 3110**

That RICHARD ALEXANDER MURDAUGH, in Colleton County, between on or about November 30, 2020 and on or about December 21, 2020, 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 created a bank account under the name "Richard A Murdaugh Sole Prop DBA Forge". He created this account for the purpose of misappropriating funds belonging to others with the illusion that the money was being paid to the legitimate settlement planning company Forge Consulting, LLC. MURDAUGH caused an \$152,866 settlement disbursement check, representing proceeds intended for the benefit of Estate

of Sandra Taylor, to be made out to "Forge". He deposited the check into the Forge account under his control, and then conducted online banking transfers to convert settlement proceeds to his own personal use, which defrauded the Estate and laundered the proceeds. 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.

A True Bill


FOREPERSON

Alan Wilson

ALAN WILSON (scw)
ATTORNEY GENERAL