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City Attorney Zach Klein Announces Criminal Charges in Anti-LGBTQ+ Hate Case

City prosecutors file multiple charges against an individual who vandalized a pride flag and directed homophobic remarks toward residents in Weinland Park

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced city prosecutors have filed multiple misdemeanor criminal charges against an individual who was caught on camera urinating on a pride flag and directing homophobic remarks toward residents at a home in Columbus’s Weinland Park neighborhood in February. Prosecutors filed four misdemeanor charges in Municipal Court Tuesday, including ethnic intimidation, criminal mischief, criminal trespass and disorderly conduct.

“Vandalizing property and making homophobic remarks in an attempt to intimidate members of the LGBTQ+ community will not be tolerated in our city,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“Columbus is diverse and tolerant, and we celebrate our LGBTQ+ community. Hate has no home here, and as long as I’m City Attorney, we will continue to aggressively prosecute hate and bias crimes.”**

According to court documents and released home surveillance video, on Feb. 8, the defendant in this case walked up to the front porch of a home in the Weinland Park neighborhood near Ohio State’s campus and urinated on a pride flag while another man recorded the incident on a cell phone. The defendant then proceeded to make homophobic remarks and banged on the door of the house before fleeing on foot.

Penalties for the misdemeanor charges filed Tuesday could include hundreds of dollars in fines, possible jail time or probation, among other penalties.