



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Date: July 30, 2025
Case # 25HF1947

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Irvine Man Charged with Hate Crimes in Two Separate Attacks on Hispanic Men, Including Punching an Elderly Driver at a Stoplight and Throwing Hot Coffee at a Driver While Hurling Racial Slurs

Santa Ana – An Irvine man has been charged with attacking two Hispanic men in hate motivated attacks, throwing a cup of hot coffee on one man while driving and getting out of his van to punch an elderly driver repeatedly at a stop light while hurling racial slurs.

Robert Tackett, 54, of Irvine, has been charged with one felony count of assault with a deadly weapon other than a firearm, one felony count of violation of civil rights, one felony count of assault with force likely to produce great bodily injury, and one felony count of inflicting injury on an elder adult.

He faces a maximum sentence of eight years in state prison if convicted on all counts. He is currently being held at the Orange County Jail in lieu of \$500,000 bail.

On July 22, 2025, around 9:30 a.m. a driver in Irvine began filming after he noticed a man having a negative interaction with the driver of a garbage truck. The man, later identified as Tackett, is accused of following him in his work van, yelling anti-Hispanic racial slurs as he pulled up next to the victim and tried to run him off the road. He is also accused of trying to slam into the other driver's vehicle, forcing the victim to slam on his brakes twice to avoid a collision.

After two failed attempts to crash into the victim, Tackett is accused of throwing a hot cup of coffee into the victim's vehicle, dousing the victim with hot coffee.

The victim did not call law enforcement but was identified after he posted his video to social media.

Around 5:30 p.m. the same day, Tackett is accused of getting out of his work van while stopped at a stop light in Westminster and punching a 72-year-old driver repeatedly through the open window of the victim's pickup truck while yelling profanity and anti-Hispanic slurs. The elderly driver attempted to block Tackett from punching him.

Another driver recorded the attack and later contacted the Irvine Police Department after video of the first attack was published on social media.

Tackett was identified and arrested by the California Highway Patrol on July 24, 2025, in Mammoth.

“Hate is a venom that poisons everything – and everyone – it touches. An attack motivated by hate is not an attack on just a single individual; it is an attack on the very fabric of our society and our community as a whole,” said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. “As the elected District Attorney of Orange County, I refuse to allow the fabric of our community to be ripped apart by acts of hate. Every member of our society deserves to go about their days unafraid that they would be targeted because of the color of their skin, their gender, or their sexual orientation. We must collectively combat hate by speaking up and speaking out against hate – and haters – to continue to send a strong message that hate will never be tolerated here in Orange County or anywhere.”

Deputy District Attorney Alex Shaaban of Special Prosecutions is prosecuting this case.

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