

Florida woman arrested for saying “delay, deny, depose” to Blue Cross Blue Shield health insurance representative on phone

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Briana Boston, a 42-year-old mother from Lakeland, Florida, has been charged with felony “written threat to kill or injure—conduct a mass shooting or an act of terrorism” after a verbal altercation with a representative from Blue Cross Blue Shield health insurance. Boston reportedly called the health insurance company after two medical claims were denied, during which she allegedly said “Delay, deny, depose. You people are next.”

Boston’s words are most likely a reference to the fatal shooting of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson. Alleged shooter Luigi Mangione reportedly wrote the words “delay, deny, depose” on the bullet casings he used to shoot Thompson in New York City earlier this month.

Her words were taken as a threat and the insurance company contacted the FBI who then contacted the Lakeland Police Department (LPD). LPD detective Stephen Bonczyk interviewed Boston at her home on the same day as the call, according to the affidavit. She then apologized for her remarks and told the detective that she did not own any firearms and was not a threat to anyone. It has also been reported that Boston does not have a criminal history or convictions or even charges.

Bonczyk, however, concluded that “Based on the aforementioned statements made by Boston and based off of current events, I believe these statements were meant to threaten the insurance company by using the UnitedHealthcare CEO’s homicide to her advantage.” Boston was arrested and her bond was set at \$100,000, with the judge determining that the high bond was “appropriate considering the status of our country at this point.”

The charges against Boston are severe. If convicted, she could face upwards of 15 years in prison.

A GoFundMe page set up by Boston’s husband to raise money for her bail has raised more than \$60,000 as of this writing with 1,400 donations. More than 1,200 people have donated from across the world, with many leaving supportive comments railing against the deadly profiteering of health insurance companies and sympathizing with her case.

One person donated \$100 and commented “Almost 2 years ago, when I had cancer, my insurance refused a test meant to assess the severity and spread of it because ‘your condition is not bad enough yet’. They wanted to wait for me to get worse instead of establishing a baseline to help my treatment. Thankfully, my experienced surgeon had a workaround. Your pain is felt by many, Briana, and voicing it is a 1st amendment right!”

Another wrote, “15 years for words spoken in perfectly understandable frustration at health insurance companies who bankrupt, betray and kill tens of thousands of their clients each year??? Such excessive sentencing by the judge isn’t a sign of strength from the elites—it’s proof of their fear and weakness. The eyes of the world are watching. Hang in there. Support and kind thoughts for you and your family from the UK.”

The charges and high bond, despite a lack of any evidence that Boston intended or possessed any capacity to carry out an act of violence, are meant to make an example of her.

The murder of Thompson has sent shock waves through the ruling class and aroused popular sympathy for the killer as tens of millions of people express their

anger under the weight of corporate insurance giants denying life-saving care at every chance. A recent Emerson College poll found that 41 percent of voters aged 18-29, a plurality of those polled, found the killing acceptable.

The invocation of the “status of our country” is a chilling legal justification. Boston’s charges are based not on the potential for her to cause harm to another but on the judge’s personal view of the state of American society. Fear of mounting opposition to the increasingly parasitic and murderous health care industry, and the capitalist system as a whole, is the primary motivation behind Boston’s arrest. While CEOs like Thompson are praised by the ruling establishment as savvy businessmen exercising their right to maximize profit—even if doing so is an act of social murder—Boston is charged with terrorism for losing her temper with a corporate giant.

Lakeland Police Chief Sammy Taylor added a condescending and paternalistic view to the arrest, saying, “She’s been in this world long enough that she certainly should know better that you can’t make threats like that in the current environment that we live in and think that we’re not going to follow up and put you in jail.”

Taylor’s statement is a message to the entire working class: “Know your place or we will put you behind bars.”

Meanwhile, insurance executives are allowed to amass massive fortunes ripped from the dying hands of working class people. Upwards of 45,000 people die every year in the US because they lack health insurance coverage and it is not clear how many more people die each year because they were denied coverage they should have received by their insurance provider. Additionally, an article in *Health Justice Monitor* estimates that nearly 340,000 people died from COVID-19 because they did not have health insurance.

The extreme nature of the case against Boston is indicative of the nervousness of the ruling class, rattled not just by the killing of Thompson but by the outpouring of popular opposition to the extraction of hundreds of billions of dollars from the working class in blood money to line the pockets of corporate executives and Wall Street investors.

It is also indicative of a ruling class in the United States that is far more concerned with protecting profits

than lives. When faced with the COVID-19 pandemic the ruling class adopted a murderous policy of “forever COVID” that has killed hundreds of thousands of people and debilitated millions more. Now, when faced with mass outrage over social murder by the health insurance industry, the ruling class responds not with pledges to fix a deadly healthcare industry but to crack down on opposition to its crimes.

Further illustrating this, New York Democratic Governor Kathy Hochul stated that she was considering establishing a hotline for CEOs who feel unsafe. Hochul reportedly held a “proactive” meeting on Tuesday with corporate representatives, counter terrorism officials and personnel from the Department of Homeland Security.

Such coddling for the ultra wealthy is not surprising from a career politician who first took office after New York Governor Andrew Cuomo was forced to resign on the back of a sexual harassment scandal concocted to cover over his administration’s role in killing thousands of people in COVID-infested nursing homes.

Radio station WBSL reported, “State officials have expressed concerns about executives relocating their businesses due to safety fears.” While Kathy Wylde, CEO of the Partnership for New York City, a group of hundreds of CEOs, said, “This demonstrates that New York has the most prepared and capable counter-terrorism resources in the country. There’s no safer place to be.”

This is how the ruling class sees popular opposition to capitalist exploitation: not as a legitimate grievance but as terrorism.



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