

PRESS RELEASE

New York Man Convicted of Hobbs Act Extortion

Monday, December 8, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York

Defendant Violently Attacked Owner of Demolition Business in Midtown Manhattan Over Purported Debt

Today, a federal jury in Brooklyn convicted Robert Brooke of one count of Hobbs Act extortion. From at least November 2019 to January 2020, the defendant violently extorted the owners of a demolition company of thousands of dollars, purportedly to satisfy a disputed debt. The verdict was returned after a three-day trial before United States District Judge Frederic Block. Brooke was acquitted of Hobbs Act extortion conspiracy. When sentenced, Brooke faces up to 20 years in prison.

Joseph Nocella, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Christopher G. Raia, Assistant Director in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), and Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge, Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Northeast Region (DOL-OIG), announced the verdict.

"Those who choose to settle disputes violently in the street are choosing to go to prison," stated United States Attorney Nocella. "Today's verdict holds the defendant accountable for his brazen conduct."

"Today's verdict holds the defendant accountable for his criminal conduct. Violence and extortion have no place in America's workplaces. The Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General will continue working with our law-enforcement partners to investigate labor-related crimes and to ensure that those who threaten workers or employers for personal gain are brought to justice," stated DOL-OIG Special Agent in Charge Mellone.

As proved at trial, in the fall of 2019, the defendant engaged in a violent extortion scheme against the victim owners of a demolition company over purported debts owed to Diego Tantillo, an inducted member of the Gambino organized family, and a company that was co-operated by Tantillo and Brooke (the Company). On December

18, 2019, one of the victims was walking to work when he was ambushed and attacked by Brooke at 50th Street and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan. The victim suffered a fractured cheek bone, black eye and contusions to his face. The victim testified that he and his brothers, who were partners in the demolition company, understood that Tantillo, who they knew was a member of the Gambino organized crime family, was involved in the attack by Brooke. In the weeks after the beating, Tantillo reached out to the victim brothers and told them to pay Brooke and to drop the criminal charges against the defendant. Fearing for themselves and their employees, the owners of the demolition company paid \$50,000 to Tantillo and \$40,000 to the Company. Tantillo pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy in October 2025 and is awaiting sentencing.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Organized Crime and Gangs Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Andrew M. Roddin, Elias Laris, and Brooke Theodora are in charge of the prosecution.

The Defendant:

ROBERT BROOKE
Age: 58
New York, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 23-CR-443 (FB)

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Updated December 9, 2025

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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