

**APPENDIX A**

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FILED

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

NOV 30 2022

MOLLY C. DWYER, CLERK  
U.S. COURT OF APPEALS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

v.

DAVID JAH, Sr.,

Defendant-Appellant.

No. 21-10213

D.C. No. 3:19-cr-00026-WHA-1

MEMORANDUM\*

Appeal from the United States District Court  
for the Northern District of California  
William Alsup, District Judge, Presiding

Submitted November 14, 2022\*\*  
San Francisco, California

Before: S.R. THOMAS and BENNETT, Circuit Judges, and MOSKOWITZ,\*\*\*  
District Judge.

David Jah, Sr., appeals his conviction for conspiracy to commit arson, in  
violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 844(i) and (n). Jah challenges the sufficiency of the

\* This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent  
except as provided by Ninth Circuit Rule 36-3.

\*\* The panel unanimously concludes this case is suitable for decision  
without oral argument. See Fed. R. App. P. 34(a)(2).

\*\*\* The Honorable Barry Ted Moskowitz, United States District Judge for  
the Southern District of California, sitting by designation.

evidence on the interstate commerce element of arson and the district court's answer to the jury's question on that element. We have jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1291, and we affirm. Because the parties are familiar with the factual and procedural history of the case, we need not recount it here.

"We review *de novo* the sufficiency of the evidence." *United States v. Backman*, 817 F.3d 662, 665 (9th Cir. 2016). We must reject a sufficiency challenge if, when viewing the trial evidence "in the light most favorable to the prosecution," a trier of fact could rationally vote to convict based on the evidence. *United States v. Nevils*, 598 F.3d 1158, 1163–64 (9th Cir. 2010) (en banc) (citation omitted); *accord United States v. Powell*, 469 U.S. 57, 67 (1984) ("Sufficiency-of-the-evidence review involves assessment by the courts of whether the evidence adduced at trial could support any rational determination of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt."). Jah's sufficiency-of-the-evidence challenge lacks merit.

The trial evidence established that Jah hired two people to firebomb a home in which a lawyer had a room in which he conducted his law practice. The interstate commerce element can be satisfied with evidence that a law practice is maintained in a home. *See Jones v. United States*, 529 U.S. 848, 859 (2000) (holding that Section 844(i) applies to "property currently used in commerce or in an activity affecting commerce"); *Russell v. United States*, 471 U.S. 858, 862 (1985) (holding that rental apartment satisfied interstate commerce element); *Harrison v. Ollison*,

519 F.3d 952, 961 (9th Cir. 2008) (explaining that stipulation that van was used in commercial business “would be sufficient to bring the property within the scope of § 844(i) under *Jones*”); *United States v. Gomez*, 87 F.3d 1093, 1096 (9th Cir. 1996) (explaining that interstate commerce element covers properties “commercial or economic in nature”); *see also United States v. Doggart*, 947 F.3d 879, 885 (6th Cir. 2020) (indicating that “a private residence that is also used as the primary office of a lawyer” would satisfy interstate commerce element); *Martin v. United States*, 333 F.3d 819, 821 (7th Cir. 2003) (“It remains true after *Jones* that buildings actively used for a commercial purpose, including restaurants, *home offices*, church daycare centers, and temporarily vacant rental properties, all possess the requisite nexus with interstate commerce under § 844(i).” (citations omitted and emphasis added)).

“We review *de novo* whether the district court’s response to a jury question correctly states the law.” *United States v. Castillo-Mendez*, 868 F.3d 830, 835 (9th Cir. 2017). Jah’s challenge to the district court’s response to the jury’s question also fails. While it was deliberating, the jury sent a note asking: “In order to prove the [interstate commerce] element, does the building need to be used in a commercial use *and* interstate commerce *or* does the building only need to be used for a commercial purpose.” The district court circled the second part of the question — that is, the part asking “does the building only need to be used for a commercial purpose” — and wrote: “This would be sufficient to prove the [interstate commerce]

element.”

The district court’s answer is consistent with *Jones*. 529 U.S. at 850–51 (ruling that “residence not used for any *commercial purpose*” did not satisfy interstate commerce element (emphasis added)); *United States v. Cortes*, 299 F.3d 1030, 1034 (9th Cir. 2002) (explaining that *Jones* “interpreted the [interstate commerce] element to encompass only property actively employed for *commercial purposes*” (emphasis added)); *see also United States v. Aljabari*, 626 F.3d 940, 948 (7th Cir. 2010) (explaining that “[t]he Supreme Court has construed the federal arson statute to protect buildings actively used for a *commercial purpose*” (emphasis added)). Moreover, this Court has already rejected the very challenge Jah is now raising. *See Gomez*, 87 F.3d at 1097 (finding “no error with” jury instruction providing that “[a] building is used in interstate commerce, or any activity affecting interstate commerce, if the building itself is used for a business or *commercial purpose*” (emphasis added)).

Jah’s additional filings (Docket Nos. 63, 64, 68, 69, & 77) were submitted by him personally when he is represented by counsel. The Court strikes those filings as not submitted by counsel. *See* 9th Cir. R. 25-2; Fed. R. App. P. 32; *see also United States v. Cross*, 959 F.3d 847, 853 (7th Cir. 2020) (“A defendant does not have a right to represent himself when he is also represented by counsel.”).

**AFFIRMED.**

APPENDIX A

## APPENDIX B

FEB 9 2023

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

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DAVID JAH, Sr., AKA David Jaa,

Defendant-Appellant.

No. 21-10213

D.C. No.

3:19-cr-00026-WHA-1

Northern District of California,  
San Francisco

## ORDER

Before: S.R. THOMAS and BENNETT, Circuit Judges, and MOSKOWITZ,  
District Judge.

Appellant's motion to extend the time to file any petition for rehearing is construed as a request to recall the mandate. The request to recall the mandate is granted.

Appellant's motions to stay proceedings are denied.

Appellant's motion requesting a PACER exemption is granted.

Appellant's motion for Criminal Justice Act funding is denied as moot.

The panel has voted to deny the petition for rehearing.

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\* The Honorable Barry Ted Moskowitz, United States District Judge for the Southern District of California, sitting by designation.

The full court has been advised of the petition for rehearing en banc, and no judge of the court has requested a vote on the petition for rehearing en banc. Fed. R. App. P. 35(b).

The petition for rehearing and the petition for rehearing en banc are denied.

Appendix B

APPENDIX C

EVIDENCE THAT PERJURED TESTIMONY WAS USED TO SUPPORT OTHER CRIMES

THAT STRENGTHEND THE GOVERNMENT'S CASE

claimed appellant spoke about the attack in the Richmond District and appellant explained they attacked the wrong address. [4 ER 499]

At the casino meeting, according to Williams, appellant told Williams to first target the Lafayette house and then the Danville address. [4 ER 499] Appellant also showed Williams a video of a fire in San Jose as an example of a complete job. [4 ER 500-501]

A few weeks after the casino meeting, Williams and Alexis-Clark travelled to Lafayette and Danville [4 ER 504]. Alexis-Clark testified that Williams threw the Molotov cocktail at the Danville house but that it did not break through the window. [3 ER 290-291]

Instead, the bottle hit the bedroom upstairs and the bottle broke without entering the house. [3 ER 291] Alexis-Clark threw the Molotov cocktail at the Lafayette house [3 ER 291] Alexis-Clark then contacted appellant by text about getting paid, but he never received payment. [3 ER 293-294]

Alexis-Clark testified pursuant to a cooperation agreement with the government and in hopes of receiving a reduced prison term. [3 ER 295] Alexis-Clark also initially denied involvement in the arson attempts. [3 ER 296] Williams also testified pursuant to cooperation

THIS WAS KNOWN  
TO BE FALSE  
(SUBJECT PROPERTY)

THIS WAS KNOWN  
TO BE TRUE

back into the car and sped off. *Id.* Later that morning, the Towneys noticed that one of their bedroom windows was cracked. 5-ER-672-80. They also discovered in their front yard a broken bottle and a rag with burn marks on it. *Id.*

Meanwhile, immediately after attacking the Danville house, Williams and Alexis-Clark drove to [REDACTED] Carlyle Terrace in Lafayette. 3-ER-291, 4-ER-508. William Whiteman, Jah's sister's former attorney, was living there with his wife, two sons, and pregnant daughter-in-law. 6-ER-798. This time, Alexis-Clark lit the Molotov cocktail and tossed it through a window. 3-ER-291-92. He saw the cocktail cut through the window before he and Williams sped off. 3-ER-292.

Whiteman was immediately awakened by the sound of the bottle crashing through his bedroom window. 6-ER-800-06. Bolting up in bed, he smelled a strong odor of gasoline. *Id.* Glass from the window littered the bed and floor. *Id.* Trying to avoid the glass, Whiteman looked under the bed. *Id.* He discovered a wine bottle stuffed with a rag, with gasoline pouring out. *Id.* The Molotov cocktail had failed to ignite. 6-ER-807.

#### ***10. Law enforcement arrested Jah, Williams, and Alexis-Clark***

Law enforcement arrested Jah, Williams, and Alexis-Clark shortly after the attacks in Danville and Lafayette. 4-ER-423. During the ensuing investigation, FBI Special Agent Keigan Park executed a search warrant for Jah's phone and