

## Defendant Pleads Not Guilty in Fatal Shooting of Minnesota Lawmaker

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— Categories: Crime



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Vance Luther Boelter, 57, pleaded not guilty on Thursday to federal charges related to a June 14 shooting that left Minnesota state lawmaker Melissa Hortman dead and injured others.

The plea was entered during a hearing before U.S. District Judge Dulce Foster in Minneapolis, according to court records and reports from The New York Times.

Boelter faces a range of federal charges, including murder, firearm offenses, attempted murder, and stalking. These stem from the violent incidents in June involving two Democratic lawmakers and their families.

Melissa Hortman, the Minnesota House Speaker and state representative, was killed in the attack. Her husband, Mark Hortman, was also fatally wounded, according to prosecutors.

Boelter is also charged with stalking state Senator John Hoffman and allegedly shooting Hoffman and his wife during the same morning as the attack on the Hortmans.

Following federal proceedings, Boelter is expected to face state-level charges for murder, attempted murder, and stalking in connection with the case.

The shooting in June shocked the Minnesota political community and raised concerns about safety and political violence targeting elected officials.

Federal prosecutors said Boelter's alleged actions demonstrate a pattern of targeted violence and stalking against the lawmakers, intensifying the severity of the charges.

Boelter's defense attorney has not commented publicly following the plea hearing. The court has set a schedule for pretrial motions and hearings ahead of the trial.

The federal case is expected to proceed first, with the state trial to follow, according to legal experts.

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and other state leaders condemned the violence and expressed condolences to the families affected by the tragic shooting.

"This attack was a grievous act that has left deep wounds in our community," Governor Walz said in a statement. "We must continue working to ensure the safety of all who serve the public."

Authorities have not disclosed a clear motive for the shooting, but investigators continue to gather evidence to present at trial.

The case highlights ongoing concerns about threats and violence aimed at public officials nationwide, prompting calls for increased security measures.

Legal observers say the federal charges carry severe penalties, including the possibility of life imprisonment if Boelter is convicted of murder.

The community and state officials await the upcoming court proceedings as the justice system addresses the tragic incident.