



604 C Street ~ Eureka, CA 95501  
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**Brian Stephens**  
Chief of Police

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **Vehicle on Fire at Humboldt County Courthouse**

On August 23, 2025, at approximately 7:51 pm, Eureka Police Department (EPD) officers and Humboldt Bay Fire personnel responded to the 800 block of 5th Street for a report of a vehicle fire on the front lawn of the Humboldt County Courthouse.

Upon arrival, the first officer observed a white sedan fully engulfed in flames on the courthouse lawn. The officer recognized the vehicle from prior contacts and quickly located the registered owner, identified as **Stephen Paiment, 69, of McKinleyville**, standing in the intersection of 5th and I Streets acting erratically. Based on witness information that a male subject had intentionally set the fire, the officer detained Paiment without incident.

The investigation determined that Paiment drove his vehicle onto the courthouse lawn, exited, and then reached back through the window to deliberately ignite the vehicle. Several witnesses positively identified Paiment as the individual responsible.

Paiment was arrested and booked into the Humboldt County Correctional Facility for felony arson and littering.

Paiment is known to local law enforcement and has been engaged in protests regarding an alleged use-of-force incident. His vehicle and scattered papers at the scene contained writings related to those allegations, as well as statements opposing nuclear power. Investigators also believe Paiment is responsible for chalk messages recently written on the courthouse sidewalk.

No injuries were reported. Damage was limited to Paiment's vehicle and the courthouse lawn.

This remains an active investigation. Anyone with additional information is asked to contact the EPD Criminal Investigations Unit at 707-441-4300.

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Media Release Prepared by: Chief Brian Stephens