

Family Research Council shooter charged with terrorism

by [Jeanie Groh](#)

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WASHINGTON (RNS) A federal grand jury added terrorism to the list of charges faced by the Virginia man who was indicted in the shooting of a security guard at the conservative Family Research Council's Washington offices.

Floyd Lee Corkins II, 28, of Herndon, Va., was arrested Aug. 15, shortly after police say he opened fire in the lobby of the FRC's downtown headquarters, injuring an unarmed security guard.

Before he opened fire, Corkins reportedly was carrying a bag of Chick-fil-A sandwiches, and told security guard Leo Johnson he disagreed with the FRC's politics; the FRC had supported the fast-food chain's donations to groups that oppose same-sex marriage.

Corkins pleaded not guilty to initial charges of interstate transportation of a firearm and ammunition, as well as the District of Columbia offenses of assault with intent to kill while armed and possession of a firearm during a crime of violence.

In addition to the new terrorism charge, the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia said Wednesday (Oct. 24) that a federal grand jury added six District of Columbia charges, including attempted murder while armed; aggravated assault while armed; second-degree burglary while armed; and three counts of possession of a firearm during a crime of violence.

Corkins is the first defendant to be charged with committing an act of terror under the District of Columbia's 2002 Anti-Terrorism Act, a charge that carries up to 30 years in prison.

Though prosecutors declined to share information about the case, Bill Miller, spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office, said "the investigation has been continuing" and that Corkins is due in court Friday (Oct. 26) for a status hearing.

"The terrorism indictment announced today – the first under the District's 10-year-old anti-terrorism statute – makes clear that acts of violence designed to intimidate and silence those who support natural marriage and traditional morality violate the law and undermine the security and stability of our form of government," FRC President Tony Perkins said in a statement.

"The Family Research Council and our supporters understand the essential nature of our First Freedoms of religion and speech in the survival of our constitutional republic and remain unequivocally committed to our mission of advancing faith, family and freedom." —RNS