

Man Arrested for Tipping Over Ten Commandments

A man was taken into custody on Friday on suspicion of knocking over a Ten Commandments monument with a car on the grounds of the Oklahoma statehouse and then fleeing the scene, law enforcement officials said on Friday.

The U.S. Secret Service detained the man, who has not been identified, after he was alleged to have made threatening statements at a federal building in Oklahoma City. The man told agents he urinated on the monument and ran it over with a car, said David Allison, the assistant special agent in charge.

The Oklahoma Highway Patrol said they believe a single person was responsible for the act on Thursday night that left the 6-foot () monument broken in several large pieces not far from where it was mounted. The man will be turned over to Oklahoma police.

The man said the devil told him to knock down the monument, local broadcaster KOCO quoted law enforcement officials as saying.

"He made those kind of statements," Allison said, without adding further details.

Conservative Christian groups fought for years to have the Ten Commandments displayed at the statehouse. Legislative approval was eventually granted to the groups, who said they were using private funds to commemorate a historical event and were not in violation of constitutional restrictions on the state sponsoring religion.

The monument went up in 2012.

The American Civil Liberties Union has sued to have the monument removed on the grounds that it violated church-and-

state provisions. Groups including Satanists and Hindus have petitioned to erect their own monuments on the capitol grounds, saying their monuments also will mark historical events.

Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin, a Republican, said the monument will be rebuilt.

"This monument was built to memorialize the historical significance of the Ten Commandments in guiding our own laws and lives," Fallin said.

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