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N.H. Politician Charged For Lying About Accident



Gary Dodds leaving Portsmouth Regional Hospital in April 2006.

[N.H. Police Cast Doubt On Candidate's Crash Story](#) (6/21/2006)

[Dodds Leaves Portsmouth Hospital In Wheelchair](#) (4/14/2006)

[Dodds Recalls Crash In Web Site Message](#) (4/10/2006)

[Dodds Still In Hospital With Hypothermia](#) (4/8/2006)

[Missing NH Candidate Found In Woods](#) (4/7/2006)

Prosecutors have charged Gary Dodds, a former congressional candidate, with lying about what happened when he disappeared and prompted a massive search after a car crash last year.

Dodds, 42, of Rye, crashed his car into guardrail on the Spaulding Turnpike last April 5. He was found more than 24 hours later by a rescue dog.

Dodds claimed he wandered away in a daze, swam across a river and huddled in the woods for warmth until he was found a day later.

Police weren't convinced. They questioned why only certain articles of his clothing were wet and why his body showed an absence of frostbite.

They also questioned Dodds' travels through the Spaulding Turnpike's Dover and Rochester tolls as logged by E-ZPass the night of the accident; the E-ZPass record contradicted Dodds' statement that he never drove through the Dover toll that night.

Prosecutors have charged Dodds with causing false public alarm and leaving the scene of an accident. He could face up to two years in jail if convicted.

A Dodds friend said Thursday police initially thought the disappearance might be linked to alcohol or an extramarital affair -- both bogus suggestions, she said.

"They had written him off as someone who was drunk or was having an affair. Now he's damaged for life," said Deb Crapo, of Rye.

She said the tables should be turned on the police.

"It should be Gary charging the police with something, but he's just too good a person," Crapo said. "Now, I think they're trying to avoid another lawsuit because this man is disabled," she said, referring to Dodds' limp after the incident. "Do I think there's a cover up? Yes, but not on Gary's part."

"There are so many crimes in this world, I cannot believe they are picking on Gary."

Dodds, a Democrat, was running for U.S. Congress in District 1 at the time of the incident.

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