

Husband's DNA found mixed with missing Connecticut mom's blood on faucet, prosecutor says

BY ERIN DONAGHUE

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— Defense Attorney **Norman Pattis**

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The blood of a missing Connecticut mother was found mixed with the DNA of her estranged husband on a sink in her home after her disappearance last month, a prosecutor said in court. Fotis Dulos, 51, pleaded not guilty Tuesday to charges of tampering with evidence and hindering prosecution in the search for his wife, Jennifer Dulos, reports CBS affiliate WFSB.

Fotis Dulos' girlfriend Michelle Troconis, who bonded out of



Jennifer Dulos

jail last week, also entered a not guilty plea to the same charges. A Connecticut judge kept Fotis Dulos' bond at \$500,000, and his attorney Norm Pattis told the Hartford Courant Dulos intends to post bail Tuesday using his retirement funds as collateral.

As he argued for a higher bail, State's Attorney Richard Colangelo said there was no reason for Fotis Dulos' DNA to be found on a faucet in his estranged wife's New Canaan

home, according to the Courant. Investigators said in previously released court papers they found evidence of a "serious physical assault" in the home, along with evidence of a cleanup. Jennifer Dulos, the documents said, was the suspected victim.

The missing woman and her estranged husband had been involved in a contentious divorce and custody battle since she filed for divorce in 2017. The Courant reports the DNA is the first evidence disclosed by the

prosecution that places Fotis Dulos, who lives in Farmington, at Jennifer Dulos' home.

The search is continuing for the 50-year-old mother of five who was last seen at her children's New Canaan school May 24. Her car was found abandoned in a park after she missed several appointments and was reported missing by friends.

That night, cellphone data show the phones of Fotis Dulos and Troconis traveling from Farmington, where they live, to Hartford's north end. Surveillance video shows a man who matches Dulos' description in a car resembling his black pickup truck stopping at over 30 locations along a four-mile stretch of Albany Avenue and dumping several trash bags in multiple trash bins, according to arrest warrants.

A woman who matched Troconis' description is seen on video at one point leaning out of the truck's passenger window, the warrant said, and either placing something on the ground or picking something up.

Investigators who later searched the bins uncovered clothing and sponges stained with the missing woman's blood, according to the warrants.

The Courant reports Fotis Dulos' attorney said in court that the state's case is weak and he doubts his client will ever be charged with murder. He argued

to reduce bail to \$100,000.

"Dulos has been tried and convicted for a crime that he hasn't even been charged for," Pattis said. "I'm somewhat surprised that we are even here at all since we've been able to account for almost all of his time that day."

Pattis said the arrest warrants show cell records that account for his client's whereabouts after 1 p.m. on May 24, the paper reports, but authorities haven't disclosed his movements for that morning.

Speaking to reporters after the hearing, Pattis said his client denies the charges, doesn't know where his estranged wife is and fully expects to be exonerated.

"I would ask everyone to put aside the easy narrative here that an angry ex-spouse took matters into his own hands to resolve a custody dispute. That didn't happen," Pattis said. "Having said that, I don't know what happened."

The Courant reports Fotis Dulos must wear a GPS monitoring bracelet, must surrender his passport and is barred from leaving the state as conditions of his bail.

New Canaan police on Monday launched a website soliciting information in the search for Jennifer Dulos. The site said investigators have so far received over 225 tips and nearly 70 responses from

the public offering video surveillance from homes or businesses. ■