

Headline Option 1: RETIRED AUSTIN TEACHER FACING 12 YEARS IN PRISON IN TURKS AND CAICOS FOR MISTAKENLY TRAVELING WITH AMMUNITION IN LUGGAGE

Headline Option 2: ELDERLY AUSTIN MAN DETAINED IN TURKS AND CAICOS FOR AMMUNITION MISTAKE MAY FACE OVER 12 YEARS IN PRISON

A 72-year-old beloved Austin teacher is being detained in Turks and Caicos, where he may face more than twelve years in prison after a few bullets lodged in a deep pocket of his luggage were found at the local airport when he was leaving the Island to return home to the United States.



On December 12, Michael “Mike” Evans and his wife were coming home from a vacation in the Turks and Caicos Islands where he visited to renew his wedding vows for their 40th anniversary. During a security check while exiting the country airport officials found a few bullets in a seldom-used pocket of his checked-luggage. Mike, a rancher and retired high school physics teacher, had no intention of traveling with ammunition.

Mike is a Texas rancher and licensed firearm owner who has a deep respect for the law. He would never intentionally bring anything illegal aboard a flight, and he was not carrying any firearms. He had absolutely no intent to break the laws of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Mike and his family are urgently seeking relief so Mike, who has multiple serious medical issues, is able to return home to receive proper and timely medical care. Mike recently completed treatment for cancer and is being closely monitored and treated for several complications of his cancer and radiation therapy. He is also currently being treated for a life-threatening neurological condition.

Mike is known widely in his community as a man who drops anything to help his neighbors. He regularly participates in community service efforts benefiting those in need. After retiring from teaching high school physics for 26 years, Mike turned to ranching full-time on his property outside of Austin. He is a leader of his local Knights of Columbus chapter and active in his rural church community.

Mike and his wife Sharon, who is also an educator, have two daughters. He is a recent grandfather of a six-month-old baby boy and drives four hours round-trip nearly every week to help care for his grandson.

Mike's trip to Turks and Caicos was supposed to be a celebration of 40 years of marriage with his wife after his long fight with cancer. Now, life as he knows it is being threatened by a complete accident. His family and loved ones are desperate to get him home and back to his treatments.

Mike's loved ones are urging anyone who would like to help to contact their government representatives. If you would like to offer financial support for the family, there is a GoFundMe site (link below) to help this elderly couple pay for legal fees, extended room and board, and other mounting expenses that have arisen as a result of these unexpected circumstances.