

STATE OF MAINE

v.

LAURA L. BILLINGS

Submitted on Briefs April 27, 2017  
Decided May 30, 2017

Panel: SAUFLEY, C.J., and ALEXANDER, MEAD, GORMAN, JABAR, HJELM, and HUMPHREY, JJ.

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

Laura L. Billings appeals from a judgment of conviction on one count of giving a false public report, 17-A M.R.S. § 509(1)(A) (2016), entered by the trial court (Knox County, *Stokes, J.*) following a bench trial.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to Billings’s contentions, the court did not commit obvious error when it permitted the State’s first witness to remain in the courtroom during opening statements where a sequestration order was in effect. *See* M.R. Evid. 615; *State v. Dolloff*, 2012 ME 130, ¶ 35, 58 A.3d 1032; *State v. Jackson*, 1997 ME 174, ¶ 6, 697 A.2d 1328 (“The primary function of sequestration is to prevent one witness from hearing the testimony of another . . . .” (quotation marks omitted)). Furthermore, the evidence was sufficient for the court to find, beyond a reasonable doubt, that Billings made a report to a law enforcement officer, knowing it was false, and with the intent that the officer believe that a crime had been committed. *See* 17-A M.R.S. § 509(1)(A); *State v. Jones*, 2012 ME 88, ¶¶ 6-7, 46 A.3d 1125; *Dionne v. LeClerc*, 2006 ME 34, ¶ 15, 896

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<sup>1</sup> This matter is one of several actions that stem from Billings’s disputes with her neighbors concerning a right-of-way.

A.2d 923; *State v. Mitchell*, 2000 ME 72, ¶¶ 6-7, 751 A.2d 444. We accordingly affirm the judgment.

The entry is:

Judgment affirmed.

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Laura L. Billings, appellant pro se

Geoffrey Rushlau, District Attorney, and Jeffrey Barody, Asst. Dist. Atty.,  
Prosecutorial District VI, Rockland, for appellee State of Maine

Knox County Unified Criminal Docket docket number CR-2015-850  
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