

# [***Minnesota State Sen. Nicole Mitchell, charged with burglary, says she was checking on loved one with Alzheimer's***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BW6-FYR1-DY7V-G15S-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

April 24, 2024 Wednesday 7:57 PM GMT

Copyright 2024 Cable News Network All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 1280 words

**Byline:** By Web staff

**Dateline:** (WCCO)

**Body**

[*Click here for updates on this story*](https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/minnesota-state-senator-nicole-mitchell-charges-burglary/)

DETROIT LAKES, Minnesota ([*WCCO*](https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/minnesota-state-senator-nicole-mitchell-charges-burglary/)) -- A Minnesota state senator now faces charges in connection to a burglary at a Detroit Lakes home earlier this week.

On Tuesday, the Becker County Attorney's Office charged 49-year-old Sen. Nicole Mitchell, DFL-Woodbury, with first-degree burglary.

According to police, officers were called at about 4:45 a.m. Monday to a residence off Granger Road and Long Avenue after the homeowner called 911 to report a burglary in progress.

Police say Mitchell was found inside, arrested and booked into Becker County Jail.

She denied the allegations in a statement posted Tuesday to her state senator's Facebook page.

In the Facebook post, Mitchell denied stealing anything and said she entered the home out of concern for an ailing family member.

Mitchell said the incident has been a "true tragedy" for her family and says she hopes it can "return to being a private matter." She also thanked friends and colleagues "of both parties" for their support.

Read Mitchell's full statement below:

Regarding the recent news:

Like so many families, mine is dealing with the pain of watching a loved one decline due to Alzheimer's and associated paranoia.Over the weekend, I learned of medical information which caused me grave concern and prompted me to check on that family member. I entered a home I have come and gone from countless times in the past 20 years, where my son even once had his own room.

Unfortunately, I startled this close relative, exacerbating paranoia, and I was accused of stealing, which I absolutely deny.

Thank you to all my friends (and colleagues of both parties) for the kind words of support and for trusting my character even before I had a chance to respond.

This has been a true tragedy for our family and my hope is it can return to being a private matter.

WCCO spoke Tuesday with Mitchell's attorney by phone. He said he advised her not to resign.

Mitchell burgled stepmother's home to get deceased father's things, charges sayAccording to the criminal complaint, the home Mitchell is accused of burgling was her stepmother's.

The stepmother called police to report someone had broken into her home. When officers arrived, the suspect - later identified as Mitchell - ran into the basement.

Mitchell was wearing black clothing and a black hat when officers found her in the basement, according to the complaint. They found a flashlight with a sock on it and a black backpack nearby. The backpack contained two laptops, a cellphone, Tupperware and identifying documents for Mitchell.

Investigators said Mitchell told them her father had recently died and her stepmother wouldn't talk to Mitchell or other family members.

"I was just trying to get a couple of my dad's things because you wouldn't talk to me anymore," Mitchell said to her stepmother during her arrest, according to the complaint.

The items Mitchell sought were "pictures, a flannel shirt, ashes, and other items of sentimental value," the complaint states.

Mitchell allegedly gave the same motive to police, also saying she had "just gotten into the house."

"Clearly I'm not good at this," she said, according to investigators, adding, "I know I did something bad."

Investigators said Mitchell got into the house through a basement window.

Police questioned Mitchell about one of the laptops found in her bag, which, when turned on, had the stepmother's name on it. She said her stepmother had given it to her, which the stepmother denied.

Mitchell made her first court appearance Tuesday morning where she was released from custody with conditions. Those conditions include, among others, remaining law-abiding and making all future court appearances.

Her next court hearing is set for June 10.

Lawmakers speak out, calling for consequencesMitchell is currently serving her first term as a state senator. A spokesperson for the Senate DFL Caucus said in a statement Monday they're "aware of the situation" but wouldn't comment.

On Tuesday, Senate Majority Leader Erin Murphy said "the allegations against Senator Mitchell are upsetting."

"The behavior alleged is far outside the character she has established in the Senate and in her distinguished career in the military," Murphy said. "We believe in due process, and Senator Mitchell has the right to a full defense of her case in court. In the coming days and weeks, Senator Mitchell must also have serious and difficult conversations with her colleagues, constituents and family."

Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson, R-East Grand Forks, said in a statement Mitchell's alleged actions require her resignation.

"I understand the difficult situation her family is facing, however the actions taken by Sen. Mitchell are disturbing," Johnson said. "The complaint released by the Becker County Attorney lays out the case of a person who took extensive preparation to burglarize a family member's home. This behavior is unbecoming of a member of the Legislature and she needs to resign from the Senate immediately."

Republican State Rep. Jim Joy, who represents the district where the alleged burglary occurred, also called for Mitchell's resignation in a statement released Wednesday.

"For this serious crime to be perpetrated by a fellow legislator against one of my constituents is appalling," Joy said. "It is clearly time for Senator Mitchell to resign, put family over ***politics*** and focus on helping her family as she faces these felony charges."

Senate GOP files ethics complaint, vote on motion to weigh expulsion failsAlso on Wednesday, Senate Republicans filed an ethics complaint against Mitchell. In a statement on the filing, Johnson said his party took action because Senate Democrats' "lack of action" forced them to "defend the integrity of Senate and seek answers for the public."

The complaint, which was filed with Democratic Senate President Bobby Joe Champion, cited three rules Republicans accuse Mitchell of violating:

56.1 Members shall adhere to the highest standard of ethical conduct as embodied in the Minnesota Constitution, state law, and these rules.

56.2 A member shall not publish or distribute written material if the member knows or has reason to know that the material includes any statement that is false or clearly misleading, concerning a public policy issue or concerning the member's or another member's voting record or position on a public policy issue.

56.3 Improper conduct includes conduct that violates a rule or administrative policy of the Senate, that violates accepted norms of Senate behavior, that betrays the public trust, or that tends to bring the Senate into dishonor or disrepute.

The second rule listed appears to be in connection to Mitchell's Facebook post, which conflicts with the police narrative.

Wednesday's session was originally set to be a busy day of legislative work, but that schedule was scrapped in favor of a "paperwork session."

WCCO's Caroline Cummings reports Sen. Eric Lucero, R-St. Michael, made a motion Wednesday afternoon to force the rules committee to immediately consider the ethics complaint, and then weigh Mitchell's possible expulsion.

The vote failed, split 33-33 among party lines. Mitchell was not present for the session and didn't vote, although other members did vote remotely.

Mitchell, who has also been a TV meteorologist and a commander with the Air National Guard, was elected in 2022 and is in the midst of her first term.

**Please note: This content carries a strict local market embargo. If you share the same market as the contributor of this article, you may not use it on any platform.**

By Web staff

TM & © 2024 Cable News Network, Inc., a Time Warner Company. All rights reserved.

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2024

**End of Document**