



U.S. Department of Justice

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EWS:SHP/AVR
F. #2026R00259

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April 23, 2026

By ECF and E-mail

The Honorable Vera M. Scanlon
Chief United States Magistrate Judge
Eastern District of New York
225 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Re: United States v. Leny Cruz, et al.
Criminal Docket No. 26-103 (PKC)

Dear Chief Judge Scanlon:

The government respectfully submits this letter in support of its request that the Court enter orders of detention against defendants Leny Cruz, Brandon Corona, Eddie Nunez, Jose Ramos, Savion Jones, and Justin Kenny. Defendant Eddie Nunez is expected to be arraigned before the Court today, and the remaining defendants will be brought from New York state custody to be arraigned in the days to follow. As described below and in the above-captioned eleven-count indictment, the defendants variously participated in a sprawling and violent carjacking and robbery scheme that spanned the Eastern District of New York and even reached down the eastern seaboard to Florida. All of the defendants are awaiting trial on other charges in New York state court, some of which are related to the instant scheme. For these reasons, and the reasons set forth in further detail below, the government respectfully submits that the defendants pose a significant danger to the community and a risk of flight. Because there are no conditions or combination of conditions that can reasonably secure their appearance in court or the safety of the community, the defendants should be detained pending trial.

I. Background

A. Offense Conduct

In a three-week period between July 12, 2025, and August 2, 2025, the defendants set out on a crime spree that included four carjackings, one attempted carjacking, two Hobbs Act robbery conspiracies, a shooting, and interstate transportation of stolen property. The victims of these crimes were shot, pistol-whipped, and otherwise terrorized on the streets of Queens and Brooklyn, and in their homes in Suffolk County and Orlando, Florida. Through these crimes, the defendants stole from the victims numerous luxury vehicles, cash, and other possessions.

1. July 12, 2025, Carjackings

As charged in Counts One and Two, on July 12, 2025, defendants Leny Cruz and Jose Ramos, together with others, engaged in an attempted and completed carjacking in the neighborhoods adjacent to the Whitestone Bridge in Queens. First, the defendants engaged in an attempted carjacking at approximately 8:40pm. The victims were backing into the driveway in a 2021 BMW X5 when a U-Haul truck driven by Cruz and Ramos pulled into the driveway and blocked the victims' vehicle. An individual then exited the U-Haul from the passenger side and approached the victims' vehicle, banging an object on the driver side window while demanding the victims exit the car. The victims put the vehicle into drive and fled the scene, hitting a parked car in the process, before making it to safety and calling 911. Images from surveillance video showing the victims backing into the driveway as the U-Haul truck attempts to block them in and the victims' subsequent flight are below:



Shortly after the attempted carjacking, defendants Cruz and Ramos located their next victim, who was sitting in his vehicle, a 2022 BMW M240i, at the end of his driveway a short drive away from the scene of the attempted carjacking. According to the victim, a U-Haul box truck pulled up at the end of the driveway, boxing him in, and a man exited the U-Haul box truck, pointed a gun at him, and told him to leave his phone and wallet. The victim complied, ran into his house, and called 911.

Notably, at the time of these two carjackings, defendant Ramos was subject to location monitoring. The ankle monitor he was wearing at the time shows his travel from Suffolk County to Queens as he traveled to the city to take part in the carjackings.

2. July 17, 2025, Carjacking

As charged in Counts Three and Four, on the evening of July 17, 2025,

defendants Leny Cruz and Brandon Corona engaged in the armed carjacking of two victims in the parking lot of a smoke shop in Queens, New York. The victims had pulled into the parking lot in a 2022 BMW M3, and the driver was exiting the store when he was confronted by the defendants, who exited what appeared to be a Porsche Macan parked behind the victims' vehicle. A still image from surveillance video showing one of the defendants running from the Porsche Macan towards the victim, who is exiting the smoke shop, is below:



The defendants demanded the victim's keys and threatened to shoot him. When the victim refused, he was pistol-whipped in the left side of his head. The defendants also forced the passenger out of the vehicle. A still image from surveillance video showing the victim as he is being pistol-whipped and the passenger getting out of the vehicle is below:



The defendants then fled the parking lot in the victim's stolen car. The victim tried to stop the defendants, including by jumping on the car as the defendants tried to drive off. The victim was thrown from the vehicle into the street. A still image from surveillance footage

showing the victim as he jumps on the BMW as it begins to reverse out of the parking spot is below:



3. July 18, 2025, Carjacking

As charged in Counts Five and Six, in the early morning hours of July 18, 2025, defendants Brandon Corona and Eddie Nunez engaged in the armed carjacking of a couple at an intersection in Queens, New York. The victim, who was driving, had stopped his 2017 BMW 540 at a red light when his vehicle was struck from behind by the defendants. After the collision, the victim exited his vehicle to inspect the damage. As he did so, two masked men emerged from the rear car, brandished guns, told the victim to put his hands up and asked where the keys were. One of the masked men then struck the victim in the head with a pistol. A still image from surveillance footage showing the victim with his hands raised and the two masked men approaching him is below:



After the victim was struck, he stood in the road holding his head briefly, while one of the masked men got into the driver's seat of the BMW 540. As the masked man entered the vehicle, the passenger got out of the BMW 540 and ran away. The victim also fled the scene and later called 911 to report the crime.

4. July 19, 2025, Non-fatal Shooting

As charged in Count Seven, on the afternoon of July 19, 2025, at approximately 5:45pm, defendant Brandon Corona shot an individual in the thigh. Surveillance video recovered from the scene showed the vehicle in which Corona arrived and fled the scene, a dark gray or black BMW 540 series vehicle. A still shot from surveillance is below:



In the surveillance video, the BMW can be seen driving up to an address on Blake Avenue in Brooklyn and stopping abruptly. The individual in the passenger side of the vehicle then gets out and goes into the building to bring the eventual victim outside. Corona, who

appeared to be driving the vehicle, then gets out and walks over to the victim, and appears to speak with him before getting back into the BMW, moving the car slightly forward, walking back out, and then shooting the victim twice in the leg. Corona then gets back into the BMW and drives away with his passenger. Two shell casings from .380 caliber ammunition were later recovered at the scene of the shooting. An image of Corona walking up to the victim is below:



5. July 24, 2025, Carjacking

As charged in Count Eight, on the evening of July 24, 2025, defendants Brandon Corona and Eddie Nunez engaged in the carjacking of a victim in the driveway of her residence. When the victim exited her vehicle, a white 2019 BMW X5 SUV, a male passenger exited a dark colored BMW double-parked in front of her neighbor's house. When the victim went to the rear of her vehicle and opened the trunk, the man ran up to her and demanded her car keys. The defendants then stole the BMW and fled the scene.

6. July 30, 2025, Home Invasion Robbery

As charged in Count Nine, in the early morning hours of July 30, 2025, defendant Leny Cruz, together with others, engaged in the attempted home invasion robbery of an individual in Orlando, Florida. During the attempted robbery, after breaking into the victim's home, Cruz repeatedly hit the victim in the face with a firearm before fleeing the scene.

7. Interstate Transportation of a Stolen Vehicle

As charged in Count Ten, later on July 30, 2025, defendant Leny Cruz fled Florida in the same Dodge Charger he had used in connection with the attempted robbery. Cruz did not own the vehicle but instead had rented it from the owner for three days, which had already elapsed. Cruz drove the vehicle from Florida back to New York and eventually into Brooklyn and later Suffolk County, where he sold the stolen vehicle to another individual.

8. August 2, 2025, Home Invasion Robbery

On August 2, 2025, just after 7:00 a.m., defendants Leny Cruz, Savion Jones, and Justin Kenny, together with others and armed with firearms, engaged in a home invasion robbery of a residence in North Amityville, New York. The defendants entered an apartment through a window and subsequently took a bag containing a large quantity of money as well as the keys to a Porsche before fleeing.

B. Other Criminal Conduct

Just hours after the July 18, 2025, carjacking detailed above, defendant Brandon Corona was also involved in a shooting for which he was later charged with attempted murder in Queens County. On the morning of July 18, 2025, NYPD officers responded to a 911 call reporting that an individual had been shot at during a road rage incident on the Cross Island Parkway in Queens, New York.

According to the victim's interviews with law enforcement, a Porsche Macan was driving recklessly. When the victim told the driver of the Macan (subsequently identified as Corona) to slow down, Corona fired on the victim. After he was able to stop, the victim observed a bullet hole on the back right side of his vehicle, beside the taillight. A photograph of the bullet hole, as well as the bullet fragment recovered in the trunk of the vehicle, are below:



For this conduct, Corona was indicted on charges including attempted murder, a Class B felony, in Queens County Supreme Court. The case is pending.

C. Procedural History

On April 17, 2026, a grand jury sitting in the Eastern District of New York returned the instant Indictment. Defendants Leny Cruz, Jose Ramos, Brandon Corona, and Eddie Nunez are each charged with at least one count of carjacking, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2119. Cruz, Corona, and Nunez are further charged with at least one count of brandishing a firearm in connection with a crime of violence, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 924(c). Corona is separately charged with being a felon in possession of ammunition, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1). Cruz, Savion Jones, and Justin Kenny are each charged with at least one count of

Hobbs Act Robbery Conspiracy, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1951(a). And finally, Cruz is charged with interstate transportation of a stolen vehicle, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2312.

On April 22, 2026, Eddie Nunez was arrested pursuant to the federal arrest warrant issued in connection with the Indictment. Nunez was taken into custody pending his arraignment on the Indictment. The remaining defendants are in New York state custody for offenses described below and will be brought to the Eastern District of New York to be arraigned at a later date.

II. Legal Standard

Under the Bail Reform Act, Title 18, United States Code, Section 3141 *et seq.*, federal courts are empowered to order a defendant's detention pending trial upon a determination that "no condition or combination of conditions would reasonably assure the appearance of the person as required and the safety of any other person and the community[.]" 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e).

Where (as here, with respect to defendant Cruz, Corona, and Nunez) a defendant is charged with a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 924(c), there is a statutory presumption that "no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of the person as required and the safety of the community." 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(3)(B). In such a presumption case, the defendant bears a burden of production to come forward with evidence that he does not pose a danger to the community or a risk of flight. *See United States v. Mercedes*, 254 F.3d 433, 436 (2d Cir. 2001). Even if the defendant successfully rebuts the presumption of detention, the presumption "remains a factor to be considered among those weighed by the district court." *Id.* Ultimately, the government bears the burden of persuasion as to the necessity of detention. *Id.* It must meet this burden by clear and convincing evidence of danger, *see United States v. Rodriguez*, 950 F.2d 85, 88 (2d Cir. 1991), or by the lesser standard of a preponderance of the evidence that the defendant presents a risk of nonappearance. *See United States v. Martir*, 782 F.2d 1141, 1146 (2d Cir. 1986).

Whether detention is sought on the basis of flight or dangerousness, the Bail Reform Act lists four factors to be considered in the detention analysis: (1) the nature and circumstances of the crimes charged, "including whether the offense. . . involves a . . . controlled substance [or] firearm," (2) the history and characteristics of the defendant, (3) the seriousness of the danger posed by the defendant's release, and (4) the weight of the evidence against the defendant. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3142(g); *see also United States v. Jacobson*, 502 F. App'x 31, 32 (2d Cir. 2012).

The concept of "dangerousness" encompasses not only the effect of a defendant's release on the safety of identifiable individuals, such as victims and witnesses, but also "the danger that the defendant might engage in criminal activity to the detriment of the community." *United States v. Millan*, 4 F.3d 1038, 1048 (2d Cir. 1993) (quoting legislative history).

Where the evidence of guilt is strong, it provides "a considerable incentive to flee." *Millan*, 4 F.3d at 1046; *see also United States v. Palmer-Contreras*, 835 F.2d 15, 18 (1st Cir. 1987) (*per curiam*) (where "the evidence against defendants is strong, the incentive for

relocation is increased”). Additionally, the possibility of a severe sentence is an important factor in assessing a defendant’s likelihood of flight. See United States v. Jackson, 823 F.2d 4, 7 (2d Cir. 1987); Martir, 782 F.2d at 1147 (defendants charged with serious offenses whose maximum combined terms created potent incentives to flee).

Under the Bail Reform Act, the government may proceed by proffer at a detention hearing. United States v. Ferranti, 66 F.3d 540, 542 (2d Cir. 1995); see also United States v. LaFontaine, 210 F.3d 125, 130-31 (2d Cir. 2000) (explaining that the government is entitled to proceed by proffer in a detention hearing). Furthermore, “[t]he rules of evidence do not apply in a detention hearing.” Ferranti, 66 F.3d at 542.

III. The Defendants Should Be Detained Pending Trial

As a threshold matter, because the Indictment charges defendants Cruz, Corona, and Nunez with violations of 18 U.S.C. § 924(c), there is a rebuttable presumption of detention under 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(3)(B). In addition, for the reasons described below, the government has met its burden of establishing that the defendants pose a risk of flight and danger to the community that cannot be mitigated short of detention.¹ Thus, an order of detention should be entered for each defendant pending trial.

A. Nature and Circumstances of the Crime

As the Second Circuit has recognized, “certain types of crimes,” including those brought pursuant to Section 924(c), which is charged in the Indictment, “warrant particular consideration under the rubric of the ‘nature and circumstances of the offense charged.’” United States v. Zhang, 55 F.4th 141, 149 (2d Cir. 2022).

Here, as set forth in the Indictment and described above, the defendants actively participated in a sprawling carjacking and robbery scheme that spanned the Eastern District of New York, and even reached into Florida, and involved shocking and violent conduct. On multiple occasions, the defendants variously broke into individuals’ homes, took their vehicles by force, pistol-whipped victims, and engaged in multiple shootings. These types of violent crimes cause particular damage to the community and weigh heavily in favor of detention.

B. History and Characteristics of the Defendants

Each of the defendants have prior criminal histories, including many with firearms-related offenses, indicating that they were not deterred by prior convictions or arrests.

Leny Cruz, Eddie Nunez, Jose Ramos, Savion Jones, and Justin Kenny have all been charged together in an indictment in Suffolk County with numerous crimes. Cruz, Jones, and Kenny each face a top charge of Robbery in the First Degree, in addition to numerous other

¹ All defendants are eligible for detention because they are charged with felonies that involve a violation of “the possession or use of a firearm . . . or any other dangerous weapon.” 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(1)(E).

charges. Ramos faces a top count of Robbery in the Second Degree in addition to other charges, and Nunez faces a top count of Burglary in the Third Degree, in addition to other charges.

Leny Cruz has additionally been charged with assault in a correctional facility subsequent to his arrest and detention in August of 2025. Justin Kenny was charged with driving a car which had previously been stolen in Brooklyn at the time of his arrest, and for fleeing from law enforcement when they attempted to arrest him on the previously-mentioned Suffolk County charges. Jose Ramos was previously arrested and charged in Nassau County with several crimes just weeks before he engaged in the carjackings at issue in the instant case.

In addition to the instant case, Eddie Nunez has also been charged in Queens County with, among other things, criminal possession of stolen property and grand larceny. Those charges arise from the theft of the Porsche Macan which appears to have been used in the July 17, 2025, carjacking and the July 18, 2025, road rage shooting, among other crimes. Eddie Nunez was driving the Porsche on July 22, 2025, when law enforcement attempted to pull him over for a traffic violation. Nunez fled, crashed the Porsche, and then fled on foot, leaving his companion and a cellphone behind in the vehicle. Law enforcement subsequently determined that the Porsche had been previously reported stolen in Queens on June 27, 2025.

Savion Jones is separately charged in Suffolk County with attempted murder and firearm charges, among other crimes, in addition to the indictment on which he faces robbery charges. Savion Jones also has prior felony convictions for firearms offenses from 2023, and was on parole at the time of his offense conduct in the instant case, having been released from prison only three months prior.

Brandon Corona has been charged with attempted murder and firearm charges for the road rage shooting, as previously mentioned. Corona has also been charged with Kidnapping in the First Degree, a Class A felony, in Queens County, in addition to robbery and assault charges. Corona was previously convicted of a firearm felony – he was released from custody on June 17, 2025, just one month before engaging in the offense conduct in the instant case.

All of the defendants stand accused of other, serious criminal conduct, and two of the defendants—Corona and Jones—were either being supervised by the criminal justice system or had been released from prison just prior to engaging in the offense conduct.

C. Seriousness of the Danger to the Community

Given the seriousness of the conduct outlined above, and the danger that the defendants' conduct presented to the community, releasing the defendants would present a serious danger to the community. The defendants engaged in a shocking number of criminal offenses in a manner of weeks. Pistol whipping innocent victims, threatening others with bodily harm, and engaging in dangerous home invasion robberies show the defendants' utter disregard for the safety of the community and certainly caused significant trauma to the victims.

In addition, the Court may and should consider the defendants' other acts of violence in assessing this factor. See United States v. Choudhry, 941 F. Supp. 2d 347, 359 (E.D.N.Y. 2013) (“[T]he Court may consider uncharged conduct in assessing the degree of

danger posed by a defendant's release.”). As described above, many of the defendants have been arrested for other violent offenses, including during the same time frame as the crimes charged in the instant case. The defendants' violent conduct, whether pertaining to recent acts of violence or those in the carjackings and robberies with which they are presently charged, clearly show that releasing them would pose a serious danger to the public.

D. Strength of the Evidence

The evidence against the defendants is compelling. The government intends to prove the defendants' guilt at trial using, among other things, testimony from the carjacking and robbery victims, surveillance footage showing the crimes as they took place, cell site and other location tracking information, physical evidence, and the defendants' own words from messaging applications.

E. Risk of Flight

Finally, the defendants pose a significant risk of flight if released. “When faced with the possibility of a significant prison term, defendants have a strong incentive to flee.” United States v. Edwards, No. 21-MJ-231 (WFK), 2021 WL 796089, at *2 (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 2, 2021). If convicted of the instant charges, the defendants will face a significant term of imprisonment, including, in the case of Nunez, Corona, and Cruz, a mandatory minimum sentence of at least seven years to run consecutive to any other sentence of imprisonment.

The Second Circuit has held that the possibility of a severe sentence—including projected sentences similar to the one the defendants face here—can establish flight risk. See, e.g., United States v. Scali, 738 F. App'x 32, 33 (2d Cir. 2018) (“The court reasonably determined that [the defendant]’s Guidelines range of 87-108 months’ imprisonment was significant enough to provide an incentive to flee.”); see also United States v. Khusanov, 731 F. App'x 19, 21 (2d Cir. 2018) (“[A] district court does not clearly err in concluding that a defendant facing a potentially lengthy prison sentence possesses a strong motive to flee.”).

Any proposed use of home detention and/or electronic monitoring in lieu of detention is insufficient here in light of the defendants' risk of flight described above. Such a proposal for home detention “at best elaborately replicate[s] a detention facility without the confidence of security such a facility instills.” United States v. Orena, 986 F.2d 628, 632 (2d Cir. 1993); see United States v. Zarrab, No. 15-CR-867 (RMB), 2016 WL 3681423, at *10 (S.D.N.Y. June 16, 2016). Here, such an arrangement is inadequate to ensure that these defendants will not flee, especially in light of several recent cases within the Eastern District where defendants fled, including in cases involving Hobbs Act Robbery and related firearm charges. See, e.g., United States v. Tony Clanton, 23-CR-328 (KAM) (defendant cut his location monitoring device on the eve of trial).

IV. Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, the government respectfully submits that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the safety of the community or the defendants' return to court, and therefore requests that the defendants be detained pending trial.

Respectfully submitted,

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