U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Eastern District of New York

CMM:AT
F. #2024R00292

610 Federal Plaza
Central Islip, New York 11722

July 1, 2026

By Hand and ECF

The Honorable Steven I. Locke
United States Magistrate Judge
Eastern District of New York
100 Federal Plaza
Central Islip, New York 11722

Re: United States v. Saad Aziz and Zabed Chowdhury
Criminal Docket No. 26-201 (NJC)(SIL)

Dear Judge Locke:

On July 6, the defendants Saad Aziz and Zabed Chowdhury are scheduled for arraignment before Your Honor on the above-referenced information, charging them with conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud, conspiracy to defraud the United States and pay health care kickbacks, paying health care kickbacks, and money laundering conspiracy. The defendants allegedly offered and paid health care kickbacks and submitted fraudulent claims to Medicaid for ambulette services to medical appointments that were not performed, or the costs were artificially inflated. For the reasons set forth below, we respectfully submit that a significant bail package is warranted in this matter.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND[1]

The defendants owned and operated Tri-Hamlet Taxi Inc ("Tri-Hamlet"). From approximately January 2019 to October 2025, the defendants paid illegal health care kickbacks to Medicaid beneficiaries to induce them to request medical transportation services from Tri-Hamlet, primarily for purported necessary Methadone treatment. In reality, the defendants often did not

[1] The proffer of facts set forth herein does not purport to provide a complete statement of all facts and evidence of which the government is aware. The government is entitled to proceed by proffer in a bail hearing. United States v. Abuhamra, 389 F.3d 309, 320 n.7 (2d Cir. 2004); United States v. LaFontaine, 210 F.3d 125, 130–31 (2d Cir. 2000); United States v. Martir, 782 F.2d 1141, 1145 (2d Cir. 1986).

provide the medical transportation services for which they billed Medicaid, yet, fraudulently submitted millions of dollars in claims for these nonexistent trips.

The defendants also systematically inflated their Medicaid reimbursements. Although numerous addiction treatment centers on Long Island were available to beneficiaries, the defendants directed beneficiaries to request transportation to addiction treatment centers in New York City and to provide false pickup or drop-off addresses so they could bill Medicaid for longer, more expensive trips. Through this scheme, the defendants submitted more than $18 million in claims for rides exceeding 75 miles and, overall, fraudulently billed Medicaid more than $35 million.

The defendants used the illicit proceeds of the scheme to, among other things, fund their lifestyles and purchase multiple investment properties and homes with a combined value of approximately $6 million.

The proof of the defendants' guilt is overwhelming. As can be seen in the filed complaint in this matter – see 2:26-MJ-114, ECF No. 1 – the defendants have both been captured on video providing illegal kickbacks to beneficiaries in the form of envelopes filled with cash. Images from the video recordings of the defendant Saad Aziz making illegal cash kickbacks to an undercover officer are copied below.

Images from the video recordings of the defendant Zabed Chowdhury making illegal cash kickbacks to an undercover officer are copied below.

The government's proof also includes approximately $35 million dollars of fraudulent claims, bank records, Medicaid records, hundreds of hours of surveillance by law enforcement, including of the defendants making kickback payments to other coconspirators, and interviews with the defendants' coconspirators.

ARGUMENT

I. The Bail Reform Act

Under the Bail Reform Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3141 et seq., federal courts are empowered to order a defendant's detention pending trial upon a determination that the defendant is either a danger to the community or a risk of flight and that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of the person as required and the safety of any other person and the community. See 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e). A finding of dangerousness must be supported by clear and convincing evidence. United States v. Ferranti, 66 F.3d 540, 542 (2d Cir. 1995); United States v. Chimurenga, 760 F.2d 400, 405 (2d Cir. 1985). A finding of risk of flight or obstruction of justice must be supported by a preponderance of the evidence. United States v. Jackson, 823 F.2d 4, 5 (2d Cir. 1987); United States v. Madoff, 586 F. Supp. 2d 240, 247 (S.D.N.Y. 2009).

Short of detention, the Court must impose such additional conditions as will reasonably assure the defendant's appearance as required and the safety of any other person and the community. See 18 U.S.C. § 3142(c)(1)(B). This may include executing "an agreement to forfeit upon failing to appear as required, property of a sufficient unencumbered value." Id. § 3142(c)(1)(B)(xi). In determining which conditions of release will reasonably assure the defendant's appearance, the Court must consider, among other things: (i) the nature and circumstances of the offenses charged; (ii) the weight of the government's evidence; (iii) the defendant's history and characteristics; and (iv) the nature and seriousness of the danger to any person or the community that would be posed by the defendant's release. See id. § 3142(g).

II. Discussion

Generally, defendants constitute a flight risk due to the seriousness of the offense, the strength of the evidence and the severity of the penalties that they face. Here, the seriousness of the offense, the strength of the evidence, and the severity of the penalties faced by the defendants all call for a significant bond. The nature and seriousness of the offenses is self-evident: the defendants engaged in a years'-long scheme to defraud Medicaid of approximately $35 million.

Moreover, as explained above, the weight of the evidence against the defendants is overwhelming. Where, as here, the evidence of guilt is strong, it provides "a considerable additional incentive to flee." United States v. Millan, 4 F.3d 1038, 1046 (2d Cir. 1993); 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").

Finally, the significant term of imprisonment that the defendants each face creates a substantial incentive to flee. 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); United States v. Martir, 782 F.2d 1141, 1147 (2d Cir. 1986) (defendants charged with serious offenses whose maximum combined terms created potent incentives to flee); United States v. Cisneros, 328 F.3d 610, 618 (10th Cir. 2003) (defendant was a flight risk because her knowledge of the seriousness of the charges against her gave her a strong incentive to abscond); United States v. Townsend, 897 F.2d 989, 995 (9th Cir. 1990) ("Facing the much graver penalties possible under the present indictment, the defendants have an even greater incentive to consider flight,"); United States v. Dodge, 846 F. Supp. 181, 184 85 (D. Conn. 1994) (possibility of a "severe sentence" heightens the risk of flight). Here, the government estimates that the defendants' advisory sentencing range under the United States Sentencing Guidelines to be 168 to 210 months when accounting for acceptance of responsibility. Accordingly, the defendants have a tremendous incentive to flee.

In sum, the government has established by a preponderance of evidence that the defendants are each a risk of flight for purposes of the Bail Reform Act, and thus a substantial bond is warranted.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the government respectfully requests that, consistent with the Bail Reform Act, the Court impose a substantial bond in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH NOCELLA, JR.
United States Attorney

By: /s/
Adam R. Toporovsky
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(631) 715-7846

cc: Defense Counsel (by Email and ECF)
Clerk of Court (NJC)(SIL) (by Email and ECF)