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**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF UTAH**

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

PETER MICHAEL LARSEN,

Defendant.

**UNITED STATES' POSITION  
REGARDING DETENTION**

Case No. 2:26-cr-00307 DS

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- ☐ The United States is not seeking detention.
- ☐ Detention is not at issue because this is an immigration reentry case where the defendant has opted to participate in the fast-track program, which includes agreeing to detention for the pendency of this case.
- ☒ The United States moves for detention based on current information. The United States' positions in this preliminary pleading could change after reviewing the Pretrial Report or learning of additional evidence. The United States reserves the right to assert positions even if the boxes next to those positions are not checked below, raise additional arguments, and file additional pleadings in support of detention. The United States' motion for detention is:
- ☒ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(1) because defendant is charged with:
- ☒ (A) a crime of violence (*see* 18 U.S.C. § 3156(a)(4)), a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1591 (sex trafficking of children), or an offense under § 2332b(g)(5)(B)

(specific enumerated crimes) for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years or more is prescribed; **or**

- ☐ **(B)** an offense for which the maximum sentence is life imprisonment or death; **or**
- ☐ **(C)** an offense for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years or more is prescribed in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 801-904), the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 951-971), or Chapter 705 of Title 46, U.S.C. (46 U.S.C. §§ 70501-70508); **or**
- ☐ **(D)** any felony if the defendant has been convicted of two or more offenses described in (a) through (c) above, or two or more State or local offenses that would have been offenses described in (a) through (c) above if a circumstance giving rise to Federal jurisdiction had existed, or a combination of such offenses; **or**
- ☒ **(E)** any felony that is not otherwise a crime of violence but involves: **(i)** a minor victim; **(ii)** the possession or use of a firearm or destructive device (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921); **(iii)** *any other dangerous weapon*; or **(iv)** a failure to register under 18 U.S.C. § 2250;

## **OR**

☐ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(2) because the case involves:

- ☐ **(A)** a serious risk the defendant will flee; **or**
- ☐ **(B)** a serious risk the defendant will obstruct or attempt to obstruct justice, or threaten, injure, intimidate, attempt to threaten, injure or intimidate a prospective witness or juror.

## **Procedure**

The defendant may seek a continuance of the detention hearing of up to five days, and the United States may seek a continuance of up to three days. 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f). During any such continuance, the defendant shall be detained. *Id.* The rules concerning the admissibility of evidence do not apply at the detention hearing. *Id.* The United States has the burden of persuasion by clear and convincing evidence that no condition or combination of conditions of release will reasonably assure the safety of any other person and the community or by a preponderance of evidence that no condition or combination of conditions of release will reasonably assure the defendant's appearance as required. *Id.*; *United States v. Cisneros*, 328 F.3d 610, 616 (10<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2003).

### Rebuttable Presumption

- ☐ A rebuttable presumption applies and the defendant bears the burden to produce some credible evidence to rebut this presumption. The United States acknowledges that it retains the burden of persuasion. The statutory presumption applies:
- ☒ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(2) (*previous violator*): There is a rebuttable presumption that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the safety of any other person and the community because:
    - (A) the defendant has previously been convicted of a Federal offense that is described in 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(1), or of a State or local offense that would have been such an offense if a circumstance giving rise to Federal jurisdiction had existed; *and*
    - (B) the defendant committed that offense while on release pending trial for a Federal, State, or local offense; *and*
    - (C) a period of not more than five years has elapsed since the date of conviction, or the release of the defendant from imprisonment, for that, whichever is later.
  - ☐ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(3) (*narcotics, firearm, other offenses*): There is a rebuttable presumption that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant as required and the safety of the community because there is probable cause to believe that the defendant committed one or more of the following offenses:
    - ☐ (A) an offense for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years or more is prescribed in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 801-904), the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 951-971), or Chapter 705 of Title 46, U.S.C. (46 U.S.C. §§ 70501-70508);
    - ☐ (B) an offense under 18 U.S.C. §§ 924(c), 956(a), or 2332b;
    - ☐ (C) an offense listed in 18 U.S.C. § 2332b(g)(5)(B) for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 or more is prescribed;
    - ☐ (D) an offense under Chapter 77 of Title 18, U.S.C. (18 U.S.C. §§ 1581-1597) for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years or more is prescribed; *or*
    - ☐ (E) an offense involving a minor victim under 18 U.S.C. §§ 1201, 1591, 2241, 2242, 2244(a)(1), 2245, 2251, 2251A, 2252(a)(1), 2252(a)(2), 2252(a)(3), 2252A(a)(1), 2252A(a)(2), 2252A(a)(3), 2252A(a)(4), 2260, 2421, 2422, 2423, or 2425.

### Factors to Be Considered

The United States may present arguments, proffer evidence, or provide testimony at the scheduled detention hearing supporting the detention of the defendant including, but not limited to:

- ☒ The nature and circumstances of the offense charged, including whether the offense is a crime of violence, a violation of section 1591, a Federal crime of terrorism, or involves a minor victim or a controlled substance, firearm or destructive device. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(1)).

On July 13, 2026, at approximately 2:30PM, LARSEN approached the victim, while victim was working at a kiosk inside the Valley Fair Mall in West Valley City, Utah, and stabbed him over a dozen times causing serious bodily injury. According to the victim, LARSEN approached him and asked him where he was from. Victim responded from India. LARSEN then asked victim if he was Muslim. Victim stated he was Muslim, LARSEN began stabbing him in the neck, chest, back and arms while stating, "God still loves you!"

Several bystanders intervened and stopped the attack and attempted to disarm LARSEN. However, LARSEN would not relinquish the knife and one good Samaritan knocked out LARSEN and disarmed him. The bystanders held LARSEN until he was taken into custody by the WVCPD. Victim was transported to the hospital in critical condition and underwent emergency surgery. Victim suffered more than a dozen stab wounds, including to his chest, back, shoulder, neck, hand, and head areas.

Post Miranda LARSEN admitted to stabbing victim because of his Muslim faith. LARSEN stated: *He had never killed anybody before and thought he was going to kill victim. Larsen said his plan was to decapitate victim and throw his head down the hallway as a sign that the country would not be overruled by Muslims. He also stated he wanted to eat victim's heart to make it something very dramatic and that he wanted to do something extreme that would cause people to rise up and take the country back. Larsen said if he could go from one Muslim to another in close proximity, he would have killed as many as possible and that his actions to be a catalyst to get people motivated to revolt against what he called the Muslim infestation. Larsen repeatedly referenced events in Europe and New York as reasons for his actions.*

During the course of the investigation witnesses stated that LARSEN had approached

brown-skin individual's working in the mall and questioned their ethnicity and religious affiliation. Fortunately, those who also responded as being Muslim were inaccessible to LARSEN because the potential victims worked behind store counters making them inaccessible. Unfortunately for Victim, he was working at a kiosk completely exposed and accessible to LARSEN. In a WVCPD interview with LARSEN's brother, he learned that LARSEN's anti-Muslim beliefs have become more radical and LARSEN may have been in communication with others who shared his anti-Muslim ideology.

☒ The weight of evidence against the defendant. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(2)).

The evidence is overwhelming and should be weighed heavily against the defendant. The attack was motivated by anti-Muslim ideology and was captured on mall surveillance cameras. Several witnesses observed the attack and at least one captured the attack on the victim via their cell phone. Two good Samaritans stepped in and attempted to stop the attack, attempting to disarm the defendant. The defendant refused to disarm causing one party to strike him knocking him out, only then was the knife removed from the defendant's hand. Bystanders held the defendant until police arrived while others attempted to render medical aid to the victim until EMT's arrived.

Witnesses came forward that the defendant approached brown-skinned individuals working in the mall and questioned their ethnicity and religious affiliation prior to the attack on the victim. Those individuals described being fearful but were protected working behind counters.

In addition to video evidence, victim statement and witness statements, the defendant admitted to committing the crime to rid the community of what he termed as a, "Muslim infestation."

☒ The history and characteristics of the defendant including the defendant's character, physical and mental condition, family ties, employment, financial resources, length of residence in the community, community ties, past conduct, history relating to drug or alcohol abuse, criminal history and record concerning court proceedings. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(3)(A)).

The defendant has several felony convictions and was currently on parole when he committed the present offense. He was convicted of assaulting a police officer with a shotgun and was serving a term on parole. He has multiple convictions for violent crimes including, Assault Domestic Violence, Arson and Destruction of Property (Domestic Violence Related).

The defendant also has several convictions for DUI's and alcohol related offenses. The defendant is a multistate offender and has a criminal history in Florida, including DUI's and disorderly conduct.

The defendant does not appear to address his alcohol issues, or anger issues toward

Religious groups and offers no insight into treatment.

Defendant has no verifiable employment or residence.

- ☒ Whether, at time of the current offense or arrest, the defendant was on probation, parole, or other release pending trial, sentencing, appeal, or completion of sentence for an offense under Federal, State, or local law. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(3)(B)).
- ☒ The nature and seriousness of danger to any person or to the community that would be posed by the defendant's release. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(4)).
- ☐ The defendant's lack of legal status in the United States. The defendant's legal status is:
- ☐ How the defendant would be subject to removal or deportation after serving a period of incarceration.
- ☐ The defendant's significant family or other ties outside of the United States.
- ☐ The defendant's use of aliases or false documents.
- ☐ The defendant's prior attempts to evade law enforcement.
- ☒ How the defendant's proposed residence, employment, or proposed treatment programs have not been verified.
- ☐ The defendant's prior failures to appear for court proceedings.
- ☒ Other reasons including: Religious Hate Crime – Defendant attacked the victim and stabbed victim over 12 times because of his Muslim faith.

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### **Victim Notification**

- ☒ The United States has notified any identified victim, or attempted to do so, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3771.
- ☒ The position of the victim on the detention of the defendant is that the victim would seek detention of the defendant.
- ☒ The victim in this matter seeks a no contact order.
- ☐ This matter does not involve a victim requiring notification.

DATED this 12<sup>th</sup> day of August 2026.

MELISSA HOLYOAK  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

/s/ Carlos A. Esqueda  
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Assistant United States Attorney