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**QUEENS MAN CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING FEDERAL DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM OF MORE THAN \$240,000 WITH BOGUS CLAIMS OF ECONOMIC HARM DUE TO COVID-19**

*Accused of Using Loan Funds to Purchase Three Residential Properties in Niagara Falls*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Humayun Kabir has been charged with grand larceny and other crimes for allegedly stealing thousands of dollars in pandemic relief funds intended to help workers and small business owners suffering hardship due to COVID-19. The defendant allegedly applied for a federal Payroll Protection Program loan and an Economic Injury Disaster loan, certifying that he needed the funds due to economic harm he suffered as a driver for Uber and Lyft. The money was then used to purchase residential properties in Niagara Falls.

DA Katz said: “The COVID-19 pandemic inflicted profound challenges on millions of workers and small business owners who were unable to sustain their livelihoods. The defendant is accused of exploiting essential lifeline programs provided by our federal government for his own personal gain. My office will aggressively prosecute people who defraud our public service programs. I thank our partners at Homeland Security Investigations New York, the New York State Department of Financial Services and the NYPD Financial Crimes Task Force for helping us to bring the defendant to justice.”

HSI New York Special Agent in Charge William S. Walker said: “As alleged, Humayun Kabir showed a blatant disregard for all legal — and ethical — responsibility in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. He now stands accused of defrauding taxpayers and small business owners in his pursuit for wealth and real estate. HSI’s El Dorado Task Force stands at the forefront of investigating financial crimes, and we will pursue justice on behalf of New Yorkers regardless of how much time has passed.”

Kabir, 53, of 161<sup>st</sup> Street in Jamaica, was arraigned last night on a nine-count criminal complaint charging him with grand larceny in the second degree, three counts of criminal possession of stolen property in the second degree, two counts of grand larceny in the third degree and three counts of falsifying business records in the first degree. He faces a potential maximum sentence of up to 15 years in prison if convicted of the top count.

Criminal Court Judge Edward Daniels ordered the defendant to return to court on January 16, 2025.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges and investigation, Kabir submitted an application to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) in June 2020 for the COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan and stated that he worked in the transportation industry. He was then approved for a loan in the amount of \$50,100 and received the funds via electronic deposit to his personal account.

In March 2021, Kabir submitted an application to the SBA for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan and stated that he was experiencing hardship due to loss of work as an Uber driver. He was then approved for a loan in the amount of \$20,833 and withdrew the funds in cash through three separate transactions at his local bank branch in Jamaica.

In May 2021, Kabir submitted an application to the SBA for an additional PPP loan. He was then approved for a loan in the amount of \$20,833 and the funds were deposited into his personal account.

In August 2021, the principal of Kabir’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan was increased by \$155,200, from \$50,100 provided in June 2020 to \$205,300.

For each of the loans provided, Kabir certified that the funds would be used solely to alleviate economic injury sustained during a declared disaster and support the business operations of the applicant.

In March 2023, while acting on a tip from a fraud monitoring service, members of the New York State Department of Financial Services (NYS DFS) launched an investigation into the defendant’s loan disbursement.

An extensive review of bank records showed that Kabir allegedly transferred \$246,966 in loan funds he received from SBA to purchase three residential properties in Niagara Falls. The case was referred to the District Attorney’s office in January 2024 for further investigation and enforcement.

Upon learning of the charges pending against him, Kabir surrendered to the 103rd police precinct on Thursday, November 21.

The investigation was conducted by the Queens District Attorney’s Office in close collaboration with Homeland Security Investigation (HSI) New York El Dorado Task Force Economic Crimes Group, Task Force Officer Douglas Libertucci of the New York State Department of Financial Services and Detective Michael McCaffery of the NYPD Financial Crimes Task Force.

Assistant District Attorney Joshua C. Trachtenberg of the District Attorney’s Frauds Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Joseph T. Conley III, Bureau Chief, Hana C. Kim, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

*Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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