



718.286.6000  
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315**  
[QDACommunications@queensda.org](mailto:QDACommunications@queensda.org)

**SIX DEFENDANTS INDICTED FOR VOTER FRAUD RELATED TO JUNE 2023 NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL PRIMARY CAMPAIGN**

*Defendants Charged in 161-count Indictment with Submitting Fraudulent Absentee Ballot Applications During Primary for NYC Council District 20; Defendants Face Up to Seven Years If Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that six defendants are variously charged in a 161-count indictment with criminal possession of a forged instrument, falsifying business records, illegal voting and other crimes in an alleged scheme to submit falsified absentee ballot applications for the campaign of Yu-Ching James Pai, who was a candidate in the June 2023 Primary for New York City Council District 20. The six defendants volunteered on Pai's campaign.

District Attorney Katz said: "Our democracy relies on integrity at the voting booth, and we will not allow that to be compromised in Queens County. As alleged in this case, the defendants went to the Board of Elections and filed fraudulent absentee ballot applications on behalf of 23 voters they had never met. I thank my Public Corruption Bureau and the Board of Elections for their assistance in this investigation."

Board of Elections Deputy Executive Director Vincent Ignizio said: "The Board of Elections is proud to work with our government partners on the federal, state and local level to refer and support election integrity investigations. We thank District Attorney Katz and her staff for working with us to protect and ensure elections in NYC are free and fair for all."

Defendants Sydnee Pai, 19; Li Zhen Wan, 46; Yee Ping Yam, 53; Lisbeth Cheng, 24; and Crystal You, 20, were arraigned today before Supreme Court Justice Leigh K. Cheng. The defendants were ordered to return to court on September 19. They each face up to seven years in prison if convicted of the top charge.

Defendants Pai and Cheng are charged with two counts each of criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree; falsifying business records in the first degree; illegal voting; offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree; criminal possession of a forged instrument in the third degree; falsifying business records in the second degree; and offering a false instrument for filing in the second degree.

Defendants Wan, Yam and You are charged with four counts each of criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree; falsifying business records in the first degree; illegal voting; offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree; criminal possession of a forged instrument in the third degree; falsifying business records in the second degree; and offering a false instrument for filing in the second degree.

A sixth defendant is expected to be arraigned at a later date.

According to the charges:

- Between approximately March 1, 2023, and June 27, 2023, the defendants volunteered for Pai's City Council campaign.
- During that time, the defendants visited the New York City Board of Elections office in Forest Hills to pick up ballots for voters who purportedly wanted to cast absentee ballots in the June 2023 primary election. The defendants were listed as the person authorized to pick up the ballots and they later returned to do so.
- The Queens District Attorney's office began an investigation following a grievance from a voter who was told that they had already placed their vote upon arriving at their designated polling location.
- Queens DA investigators interviewed multiple individuals whose names and personal information were listed on the ballot applications and learned that the voters did not fill out or sign the application, never met the defendant listed as authorized to pick it up and never received an absentee ballot.
- In total, the charges in the indictment reflect that 23 Queens County voters had absentee ballot applications and ballots fraudulently submitted in their names.
- Following the indictment, five of the six defendants surrendered today to the Queen's District Attorney's Office.

Assistant District Attorney Gabriella Giunta of the District Attorney's Public Corruption Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Khadijah Muhammad-Starling, Bureau Chief, and Christine Oliveri, Deputy Bureau Chief, under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard Brave.

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

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