



Amtrak OIG-led investigation leads to arrests, charges in multimillion dollar health care fraud scheme

For Immediate Release

June 24, 2022

NEWARK, N.J. — Three men and one woman were arrested Thursday for allegedly participating in a health care fraud scheme that bilked Amtrak’s health care plan of at least \$9 million, according to the U.S. Attorney’s Office, District of New Jersey.

Muhammad Mirza, 50, of Cedar Grove, New Jersey; Devon Burt, 49, of Blue Bell, Pennsylvania; and Hallum Gelzer, 43, of East Orange, New Jersey, were charged by complaint with conspiracy to commit health care fraud in Newark federal court. Punson Figueroa, aka “Susie Figueroa,” 55, of Long Island City, New York, was charged in the same complaint with 15 counts of health care fraud. The defendants appeared by videoconference Thursday before U.S. Magistrate Judge James B. Clark III and were released on \$200,000 unsecured bond.

According to documents filed in this case, Mirza, Figueroa, Gelzer, Burt and others allegedly recruited Amtrak employees—primarily from New York and New Jersey—to participate in the scheme by offering them cash kickbacks in exchange for the employees agreeing to allow Mirza, Figueroa, and others to use their patient and insurance information. Mirza, Figueroa, and others allegedly used this information to fraudulently bill Amtrak’s health care plan for services that were never provided or that were medically unnecessary.

U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger credited special agents of the Amtrak Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael J. Waters; special agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Frank A. Tarentino III; special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Assistant Director in Charge Michael J. Driscoll; the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Office of Criminal Investigations, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Bradley Greenberg; postal inspectors of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Postal Inspector in Charge Damon Wood, Philadelphia Division; and the Amtrak Police Department, under the direction of Chief of Police Samuel Dotson, with the investigation, leading to the charges.

The conspiracy and health care fraud charges each carry a maximum potential penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense, whichever is greatest. The charges and allegations contained in the complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Reports of fraud, waste, or abuse; criminal or unethical acts affecting Amtrak’s property or operations; or mismanagement in Amtrak programs or operations can be made 24 hours a day via the Amtrak OIG Hotline at 1-800-468-5469 or online at <https://direc.to/hPAu>.

-###-