



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

October 2022 Grand Jury

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

VARDGES ABELYAN,

Defendant.

CR 2:23-cr-00285-ODW

I N D I C T M E N T

[18 U.S.C. § 1343: Wire Fraud; 18 U.S.C. § 1014: False Statements to a Financial Institution; 18 U.S.C. § 1028A(a)(1): Aggravated Identity Theft; 18 U.S.C. § 982: Criminal Forfeiture]

The Grand Jury charges:

COUNTS ONE AND TWO

[18 U.S.C. § 1343]

A. INTRODUCTORY ALLEGATIONS

1. At times relevant to this Indictment:

The Defendant and Relevant Entities

a. Defendant VARDGES ABELYAN was the sole owner of Cargo Fleet Rentals Inc, a California corporation.

b. Defendant ABELYAN maintained at JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., a checking account in the name of Cargo Fleet Rentals Inc (the "Cargo Fleet Rentals Account"), a checking account in his own name

1 ending 6991 (the "6991 Account"), and a checking account in his own
2 name ending 5832 (the "5832 Account").

3 c. United Wholesale Mortgage, LLC, was a "financial
4 institution" within the meaning of 18 U.S.C. § 20.

5 The Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program

6 d. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security
7 ("CARES") Act was a federal law enacted in or about March 2020 that
8 was designed to provide emergency financial assistance to Americans
9 suffering economic harm as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

10 e. The Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program ("EIDL") was
11 a United States Small Business Administration ("SBA") program that
12 provided low-interest financing to small businesses, renters, and
13 homeowners in regions affected by declared disasters.

14 f. The CARES Act authorized the SBA to provide EIDL loans
15 of up to \$2 million to eligible small businesses experiencing
16 substantial financial disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

17 g. To obtain an EIDL loan, a qualifying business was
18 required to submit an application to the SBA and provide information
19 about the business's operations, such as the number of employees,
20 gross revenues for the 12-month period preceding the disaster, and
21 cost of goods sold in the 12-month period preceding the disaster. In
22 the case of EIDL loans for COVID-19 relief, the 12-month period was
23 the 12-month period from January 31, 2019, to January 31, 2020. The
24 applicant was also required to certify that all of the information in
25 the application was true and correct to the best of the applicant's
26 knowledge.

27 h. EIDL loan applications were submitted directly to the
28 SBA and processed by the agency with support from a government

1 contractor. The amount of the loan, if the application was approved,
2 was determined in part based on the information provided by the
3 applicant about employment, revenue, and cost of goods sold. Any
4 funds issued under an EIDL loan were issued directly by the SBA.

5 i. Borrowers, as part of the EIDL loan application,
6 certified that they would use loan proceeds "solely as working
7 capital to alleviate economic injury caused by disaster occurring in
8 the month of January 31, 2020 and continuing thereafter."

9 B. THE SCHEME TO DEFRAUD

10 2. Beginning no later than on or about June 18, 2020, and
11 continuing through at least June 26, 2020, in Los Angeles County,
12 within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendant
13 ABELYAN, together with others known and unknown to the Grand Jury,
14 knowingly and with the intent to defraud, devised, participated in,
15 and executed a scheme to defraud the SBA as to material matters, and
16 to obtain money and property by means of material false and
17 fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises.

18 3. The scheme to defraud operated, in substance, as follows:

19 a. To create the false appearance that Cargo Fleet
20 Rentals conducted real business, defendant ABELYAN opened the Cargo
21 Fleet Rentals Account.

22 b. Defendant ABELYAN made and caused to be made false
23 statements to the SBA in connection with obtaining EIDL loan funds on
24 behalf of Cargo Fleet Rentals, including false representations
25 regarding Cargo Fleet Rentals' number of employees and gross
26 revenues, and false certifications that the loan funds would be used
27 for permissible business purposes.

1 c. Defendant ABELYAN caused the SBA to deposit funds in
2 the Cargo Fleet Rentals Account by means of interstate wire transfer.

3 C. USE OF INTERSTATE WIRES

4 4. On or about the dates set forth below, within the Central
5 District of California, and elsewhere, for the purpose of executing
6 the scheme to defraud described above, defendant ABELYAN transmitted
7 and caused the transmission of the following items by means of wire
8 communication in interstate commerce:

COUNT	DATE	INTERSTATE WIRING
ONE	06/23/2020	Transfer of approximately \$10,000 from the SBA to the Cargo Fleet Rentals Account
TWO	06/26/2020	Transfer of approximately \$149,900 from the SBA to the Cargo Fleet Rentals Account

COUNTS THREE AND FOUR

[18 U.S.C. §§ 1014, 2(b)]

5. The Grand Jury incorporates paragraphs 1, 3, and 4 of this Indictment here.

6. On or about the dates set forth below, in Los Angeles County, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendant ABELYAN knowingly made, and willfully caused to be made, false statements for the purpose of influencing the actions of a financial institution, namely, United Wholesale Mortgage, in connection with an application to obtain a \$336,000 loan, as specifically described below:

COUNT	DATE	DOCUMENT	FALSE STATEMENTS
THREE	08/09/2021	Letter	Defendant ABELYAN falsely stated that (1) the 5832 Account was used for his consulting business; (2) the falsified bank statements he included with the letter were statements for the 5832 Account; and (3) the circled deposits on the falsified bank statements were "business related deposits"
FOUR	08/16/2021	Uniform Residential Loan Application	Defendant ABELYAN falsely stated that he (1) was employed by "Vardges Abelyan Consulting," (2) received a gross monthly income of \$5,527.34; and (3) had worked for "Vardges Abelyan Consulting" for six years and six months

COUNT FIVE

[18 U.S.C. § 1028A(a)(1)]

7. The Grand Jury incorporates paragraphs 1, 3, 4, and 6 of this Indictment here.

8. On or about August 9, 2021, in Los Angeles County, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendant ABELYAN knowingly possessed, transferred, and used, without lawful authority, means of identification that defendant ABELYAN knew belonged to another person, that is, the name of victim M.A., during and in relation to the offense of False Statements to a Financial Institution, a felony violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1014, as charged in Count Three of this Indictment.

COUNT SIX

[18 U.S.C. § 1028A(a)(1)]

9. The Grand Jury incorporates paragraphs 1, 3, 4, and 6 of this Indictment here.

10. On or about August 16, 2021, in Los Angeles County, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendant ABELYAN knowingly possessed, transferred, and used, without lawful authority, means of identification that defendant ABELYAN knew belonged to another person, that is, the name of victim M.A., during and in relation to the offense of False Statements to a Financial Institution, a felony violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1014, as charged in Count Four of this Indictment.

FORFEITURE ALLEGATION

[18 U.S.C. § 982]

1. Pursuant to Rule 32.2(a) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, notice is hereby given that the United States of America will seek forfeiture as part of any sentence, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(2), in the event of the defendant's conviction of the offenses set forth in any of Counts One through Six of this Indictment.

2. The defendant, if so convicted, shall forfeit to the United States of America the following:

a. All right, title and interest in any and all property, real or personal, constituting, or derived from, any proceeds obtained, directly or indirectly, as a result of the offense including, but not limited to, the following:

i. The real property located at 12720 Burbank Boulevard, Unit 118, North Hollywood, California 91607;

ii. The real property located at 3921 Mayfield Avenue, Glendale, California 91214;

iii. Approximately \$131,313.35 in bank funds seized by the Government; and

iv. Approximately \$27,885 in U.S. currency and gold coins seized by law enforcement officers during a search of defendant at Los Angeles International Airport on May 18, 2023; and

b. To the extent such property is not available for forfeiture, a sum of money equal to the total value of the property described in subparagraph (a).

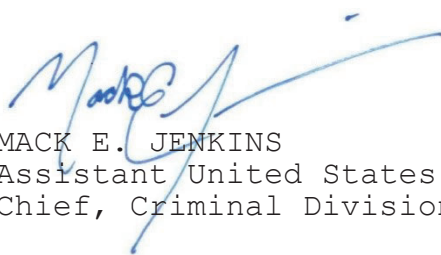
3. Pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), as incorporated by Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(b), the

1 defendant, if so convicted, shall forfeit substitute property, up to
2 the total value of the property described in the preceding paragraph
3 if, as the result of any act or omission of the defendant, the
4 property described in the preceding paragraph, or any portion
5 thereof: (a) cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
6 (b) has been transferred, sold to or deposited with a third party;
7 (c) has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the court; (d) has
8 been substantially diminished in value; or (e) has been commingled
9 with other property that cannot be divided without difficulty.

10
11 A TRUE BILL

12
13 /s/
14 _____
Foreperson

15 E. MARTIN ESTRADA
16 United States Attorney

17 
18 MACK E. JENKINS
19 Assistant United States Attorney
Chief, Criminal Division

20 RANEE A. KATZENSTEIN
21 Assistant United States Attorney
Chief, Major Frauds Section

22 ALEXANDER B. SCHWAB
23 Assistant United States Attorney
Deputy Chief, Major Frauds Section
24
25
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