



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* NEW YORK

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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

## **Former Olympic Figure Skater Arrested For Role In Defrauding U.S. Small Business Administration Of Over \$1.5 Million**

Audrey Strauss, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and William F. Sweeney, the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced today the unsealing of a complaint charging LUKA KLASINC, a former Olympic ice skater, with bank fraud and aggravated identity theft in connection with his use of falsified documents during his attempts to gain access to over \$1.5 million in funds disbursed pursuant to fraudulent U.S. Small Business Administration ("SBA") Economic Injury Disaster Loans. KLASINC, a Slovenian national, was arrested Monday afternoon in Manhattan, and will be presented today before Judge Kevin Nathaniel Fox.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney Audrey Strauss said: "As alleged, at a time when U.S. small businesses were struggling because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Klasinc thought he could scam his way to easy money. As alleged, Klasinc used false documents to try and obtain over a million dollars in funds intended to help hard working Americans but, thanks to the diligence of the FBI, his plans have been put on ice. He will now be held accountable for his alleged brazen lies."

FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge William F. Sweeney, Jr., said: "Loans issued on behalf of the SBA were intended to provide relief for businesses struggling during the pandemic. Time and again we see instances of fraud and abuse of this program. We will investigate all instances of alleged SBA loan fraud and hold accountable those who take advantage of this program for personal gain."

According to the allegations in the Complaint[1]:

KLASINC is the sole owner of a company named BOB77, LLC. KLASINC claimed that BOB77, LLC ("BOB77") is an event management company that, in conjunction with its global partners, stages major ice-themed amusement park style events around the world. Beginning in or around 2019, BOB77 opened three business bank accounts (the "BOB77 Accounts") with an international financial institution ("Bank-1"). Between July 2020 and September 2020, the BOB77 Accounts received a total of \$1,595,800 from the SBA, pursuant to eleven Economic Injury Disaster Loans. In the same period, there were numerous wire transfers from the BOB77 Accounts to international beneficiaries. In late September 2020, after identifying potential fraud, Bank-1 froze all funds in the BOB77 Accounts and contacted KLASINC for additional information regarding the account activity. In response, KLASINC provided documentation — including a falsified document purporting to be a letter from the U.S. Small Business Administration — intended to legitimize the

SBA deposits and persuade Bank-1 to release the funds. In or around June 2021, KLASINC traveled to the United States and appeared at in person at a New York branch of Bank-1, where he again attempted to persuade Bank-1 to release the funds by claiming that the SBA deposits were “investments” and not associated with a loan.

\* \* \*

KLASINC, 48, of Slovenia, is charged with one count of bank fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison, and with one count of aggravated identity theft, which carries a mandatory two-year prison term. The maximum potential sentences in this case are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

Ms. Strauss praised the outstanding investigative work of the FBI.

This case is being handled by the Office’s General Crimes Unit. Assistant United States Attorney Ashley C. Nicolas is in charge of the prosecution.

[1] As the introductory phrase signifies, the entirety of the text of the Complaint and the description of the Complaint set forth in this release constitute only allegations, and every fact described should be treated as an allegation.

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**Attachment(s):**

[Download u.s. v. luka klasinc complaint signed.pdf](#)

**Component(s):**

[USAO - New York, Southern](#)

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