

**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of New Jersey

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, June 3, 2021

## **Monmouth County Man Charged with Bankruptcy Fraud**

NEWARK, N.J. – A Monmouth County, New Jersey, man made his initial court appearance today for allegedly filing a fraudulent bankruptcy petition claiming he had limited assets and hundreds of millions of dollars in liabilities, when, in fact, he had \$2.9 million in a hidden bank account, Acting U.S. Attorney Rachael Honig announced today.

Elia Zois, 56, of Colts Neck, New Jersey, is charged by complaint with one count of concealment in bankruptcy. He is scheduled to appear this afternoon by videoconference before U.S. Magistrate Judge Leda Dunn Wettre.

According to the complaint:

Zois was one of five partners in “Business-2,” a New Jersey-based health care organization that maintained approximately 50 senior living facilities throughout New Jersey, Michigan, and Wisconsin. On Feb. 6, 2019, he and his spouse filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection, alleging that between 2014 and 2018 he had only \$9,000 in assets and \$201 million in liabilities, based upon his partnership in Business-2. A forensic accounting report concluded that during that period Zois received \$2.9 million in deposits into the bank account of “Business-1” – of which Zois was the sole owner – including approximately \$200,000 in undeclared income after he filed for bankruptcy. The hidden account was intended to conceal a portion of his income to circumvent existing IRS liens on his known assets.

The count of concealment in a bankruptcy carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Acting U.S. Attorney Honig credited the investigators of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, under supervision of Regional Director Thomas Licetti; and special agents of the Department of Labor (OIG), New York Region, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Nikitas Splagounias, with the investigation leading to the charges. She also thanked special agents of the FBI, Milwaukee field office, for their assistance.

The government is represented by Senior Litigation Counsel V. Grady O’Malley of the U.S. Attorney’s Office’s Organized Crime/Gangs Unit.

The charges and allegations contained in the complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

**Attachment(s):**

[Download Zois.Complaint.pdf](#)

**Topic(s):**

Bankruptcy

**Component(s):**

[USAO - New Jersey](#)

[U.S. Trustee Program](#)

**Press Release Number:**

21-248