

Queens Lawyer Scott Brettschneider Made Up Client's Drug Addiction



Summary: *A New York lawyer who made up a client's drug problems to get his client out of prison early is now facing prison time himself.*

A Queens criminal-defense lawyer is accused of crossing the line in order to get his client out of prison. Scott Brettschneider, 61, is accused by Brooklyn federal prosecutors of fabricating a story about his client's drug problem so that his client could be released from prison early, according to the *NY Daily News*.

Brettschneider, known as "Mighty Whitey," has been a successful attorney in Brooklyn, helping numerous people with wrongful convictions, including Wayne Martin and Derrick Hamilton. Now the attorney is facing his own prison time that he won't be able to lie his way out of. Brettschneider faces up to five years in prison for making a false statement and conspiracy. There are three other men charged in the newly unsealed indictment – Charles Gallman, 56, and Reginald Shabazz-Muhammad, 62, of Queens and Richard Marshall, 56, of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Prosecutors were seeking restrictive bail conditions for the attorney, who was overheard on wiretaps talking about a scheme that included bribing a witness to recant in another unrelated case, believing that it could result in an overturned conviction leading to a civil suit, according to *AM New York*.

William Sweeney, head of the New York FBI office, said, "Petitioning to send a known drug dealer back onto our streets before his sentence is served, and providing false documentation to prove he's eligible for early release, is a reckless prospect that risks the well-being of society as a whole."

Brettschneider's client, Richard Marshall, was in prison for crack cocaine distribution, serving a 36-month sentence, but did not have any drug or alcohol problems. The prosecutors allege that Brettschneider was involved in a 2014 letter that his assistant, Shabazz-Muhammad, wrote where he claimed to be Marshall's treatment provider. The letter was intended as a certification of his substance abuse so he could be released from prison early and entered into a residential treatment program.

Marshall asked Brettschneider to get the letter stating he was dependent on marijuana and alcohol. Shabazz-Muhammad signed the letter, posing as the treatment provider. Gallman was a middleman in the scheme. Gallman had been under investigation by the Queens district attorney's office since 2014, indicted in 2015. He is the other person heard talking with Brettschneider about getting "a false witness recantation to a prospective client."

Prosecutors added, "The two men started dreaming about how many millions of dollars the civil case would bring. Brettschneider thought they could get a third of \$22,000,000, agreeing with Gallman that it could be their 'retirement money.'"

Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Richard Donoghue stated the lawyer, "participated in a scheme to gain a narcotics trafficker early release from prison by falsely informing the Bureau of Prisons that he was a candidate for a drug rehab program."

He has pleaded not guilty, posting a \$500,000 bond to be released from custody. His attorney, Ray Perini, stated his client's status within the legal circle would help be vindicated at trial. Perini said, "It's my intention to get his reputation back by going to trial and getting an acquittal."

Can an attorney be too good? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

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