

# ABOUT THOSE TWO SEALED DOCKETS RELATED TO THE HENRY CUELLAR CASE...

Remember when I noted that there were two sealed dockets that had been deemed “related” to the Henry Cuellar docket?

There are two cases related to this one, 4:24-cr-00089, 4:24-cr-00113, both of which were charged this year, both of which remain sealed. That means several other people involved in this scheme are also being prosecuted.

There are several key participants in this alleged scheme who might be candidates for either parallel prosecution or cooperation deals. For example, one of the Cuellars’ adult children has allegedly been getting a cut of these deals and, in 2021 (both schemes appear to have paused in 2020), took over the Azerbaijani scheme and got payments to close out the Mexican scheme. As noted below, absent that child’s involvement, at least the Azerbaijani side of the indictment would face timeliness problems.

The indictment also describes that a San Antonio associate of Cuellar’s served as middleman for the contract with Mexico, allegedly laundered through Cuellar’s former Chief of Staff; three paragraphs of the indictment describe conversations the San Antonio associate had with Cuellar back in 2015 that must arise from his direct testimony.

They’ve been unsealed.

They belong to the San Antonio associate,

Florencio Rendon, and the former Chief of Staff, Mina Strother.

Both entered into cooperation plea deals in early March.

That news comes amid news that several other current Cuellar aides have quit.

Which leaves one thing to be resolved: How DOJ plans to rope the Cuellar's adult child into this, without whose inclusion this prosecution has timeliness problems (though it's possible they'll trade that child's fate for quick pleas).

In other Cuellar related news, DOJ filed to start the CIPA process today, doing so at a far earlier point in the prosecution than SDNY did in the Bob Menendez case. I had noted that there were dated, probably intercepted discussions among Azerbaijani officials about recruiting Cuellar. I would imagine DOJ hopes to protect more recent such intercepts via the CIPA process.

I said already, this prosecution is a lot more straightforward than the Menendez one. Particularly if DOJ can leverage the child, this thing may not go to trial.