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**MONTICELLO** – A judge has lowered bail against a rabbinical student charged with sexually assaulting an 11-year-old boy in Sullivan County.

Haim Boukris, 29, of South Fallsburg, was arrested April 23 on a sealed indictment charging him with three counts of predatory sexual assault against a child and first-degree sexual abuse, felonies. He appeared in Sullivan County Court on Wednesday morning so his lawyer, Kenneth Gribetz of Gribetz & Loewenberg in New City, could argue for his \$1 million bail to be lowered.

Boukris is studying at a South Fallsburg yeshiva to be ordained as a rabbi.

On Wednesday afternoon, Sullivan County District Attorney Jim Farrell said Boukris is charged with sexually assaulting the boy in the spring of 2011, in one incident. Farrell said he argued to keep the bail at \$1 million. The predatory sexual assault against a child charge carries a minimum sentence of 10 years to life in prison and a maximum of 25 years to life.

“We do believe he is a substantial flight risk,” Farrell said. Boukris is an Israeli citizen.

Farrell said Judge Michael McGuire, filling in on the bail hearing for Judge Frank LaBuda, ordered bail reduced to \$200,000 cash or \$400,000 bond, with the provision that Boukris surrender his passport.

Farrell said Boukris also voluntarily turned over the passports of his wife and four children.

Gribetz said his client glad that bail was reduced and looked forward to clearing his name of this claim, one that the lawyer said the complainant has made in different versions since 2011.

“We’re certain that he will be vindicated of the charges,” Gribetz said. “They’re baseless, and we’re anxious for a speedy trial.”

According to Sullivan County Jail Chief Hal Smith, Boukris posted \$200,000 cash bail and was released at 2:08 p.m. Wednesday.

A court return date has not yet been set.

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