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**QUEENS MAN CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTED MURDER AND ASSAULT
IN SHOOTING OF FORMER SUNY BUFFALO FOOTBALL PLAYER**

*A Bump Inside a Deli Erupted into a Fight Followed By a Single Gun Shot;
Defendant Allegedly Seen on Video Surveillance Firing Point Blank at Victim;
Faces Up to 25 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that a 27-year-old Hollis, Queens man has been charged with attempted murder and other crimes for allegedly shooting a former student athlete outside a deli on Springfield Boulevard Monday afternoon.

District Attorney Katz said, “This kind of gun violence is unacceptable. A young man is now fighting for his life because of a petty incident that spiralled out of control with a gun. The defendant has been apprehended and will face the consequences for his alleged actions.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Jeffrey Thurston, 27, of Jamaica Avenue in the Hollis neighborhood of Queens. The defendant’s arraignment is pending in Queens Criminal Court on a complaint charging him with attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. If convicted, Thurston faces up to 25 years in prison on this complaint alone.

According to the complaint, around 4:30 p.m. on Monday, July 27th, the defendant was inside a deli on the corner of Springfield Boulevard and 136th Avenue when Malachi Capers, 20, walked into the store and bumped into Thurston. The defendant pushed Mr. Capers and then allegedly threw a punch. Capers, who played defensive end for SUNY Buffalo, chased the defendant out of the store and tackled him on the sidewalk.

Continuing said DA Katz, video surveillance from both inside the deli and outside on the sidewalk shows the fight that ensued. On the video the two men wrestled on the ground outside. When both were on their feet again, Thurston allegedly pulled out a handgun and fired a single shot into Mr. Capers’ abdomen.

The victim was rushed to a nearby hospital where he is in critical condition. Thurston fled the scene, but was apprehended yesterday by the Regional Fugitive Task Force of the New York City Police Department.

Defendant Thurston is also charged in a second complaint with burglary, robbery and assault for allegedly striking an estranged girlfriend and taking her cell phone on April 4, 2020. In a third criminal complaint, the defendant is charged with attempted assault for allegedly firing

at an occupied vehicle on July 8, 2020. Thurston is awaiting arraignment on these charges as well.

The investigation into the attempted murder was conducted by Detective Matthew DeBonis of the 105th Precinct and Detective James Zozarro of NYPD Queens South Homicide Squad, under the supervision of Lieutenant James McGarry of the New York City Police Department's 105 Precinct Detective Squad and Lieutenant Richard Rudolph of Queens South Homicide Squad.

Senior Assistant District Attorneys Franchesca Basso and Patricia Diaz, of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau, are prosecuting the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief, Peter McCormack III, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, John Kosinski and Kenneth Appelbaum, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel Saunders.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at www.queensda.org