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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2020

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STATEMENT OF QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ
IN SUPPORT OF REPEALING THE LOITERING LAW IN REGARDS TO PROSTITUTION

District Attorney Melinda Katz today announced her support for a bill that would repeal the crime of loitering for the purposes of prostitution from the New York State Penal Law. Since taking office on January 1st the District Attorney has not charged or convicted a single individual for the crime of loitering for the purposes of prostitution and until the law is repealed she will decline to prosecute anyone arrested on this charge in Queens County.

District Attorney Katz said, “This decision was made after careful consideration, which included an analysis of historical data that demonstrated enforcement of this statute often used to arrest and harass people based on their gender or appearance and adversely impacted already marginalized members of our community. Our objective is not to penalize people who are being victimized or commercially exploited sexually, but rather to connect them to meaningful services, support and tools to enable them to safely exit the sex trade industry.”

This Office is committed to combatting human trafficking by implementing policies designed to provide much-needed services and assistance to victims. The DA reiterated that victims of sex trafficking will not face charges in Queens. But those responsible for forcing these victims into the sex trade industry will be held responsible and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

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