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**D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN SENTENCED TO 40 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON
IN MURDER OF CAB DRIVER AND SHOOTING OF FACTORY WORKER**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Jamaica, Queens, man has been sentenced to 40 years to life in prison for the November 2002 fatal shooting of a Woodside cab driver and the wounding of a Jackson Heights factory worker during two botched robberies.

District Attorney Brown said, "The crimes of which the defendant has been convicted and now punished were cold, calculated and opportunistic, and resulted in one hardworking family man senselessly losing his life and another being seriously wounded. I hope that the surviving victim and all of those affected by these two tragic incidents can find some degree of solace in today's sentence and in the knowledge that the defendant will be behind bars for many years as punishment for his actions."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Gary Hodges, 29, of 108-09 159th Avenue in Jamaica, Queens. The defendant pled guilty on June 30, 2004 to second-degree murder before Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert J. Hanophy who imposed today's indeterminate sentence of 40 years to life in prison.

The District Attorney said the defendant admitted that, at approximately 3:00 a.m. on November 9, 2002, he and two accomplices – Paul Chandler and Jason Wright – attempted to rob yellow cab driver Luis Quizhpi, 52, outside his Woodside home. Quizhpi, who had just finished a 14-hour shift, was shot once in the forehead by Chandler, who was armed with an illegal .32-caliber revolver, following a brief struggle in which the victim tried to escape. The victim died three days later.

Hodges further admitted that three days later, at approximately 4:20 a.m. on November 12, 2002, he, Chandler, Wright and a fourth man – Marlon Clements, 24, – attempted to rob Orlando Giraldo, 42, in Jackson Heights as he headed to his factory job. When Giraldo resisted and ran from the scene, three of the robbers pursued him, including Chandler, who fired two shots, striking the victim in the right buttock and his left leg. In both instances, the robbers fled empty handed.

Chandler, 34, of 106-09 27th Avenue in East Elmhurst, New York was convicted on January 27, 2006, after trial of second-degree murder, second-degree attempted murder, first- and second-degree attempted Robbery, first-degree assault and second- and third-degree criminal possession of a weapon before Queens Supreme Court Justice Daniel Lewis who sentenced him to 25 years to life in prison. Wright, 30, of 106-35 159th Street, Jamaica, Queens, pleaded guilty on April 24, 2004, to second-degree criminal possession of a weapon also before Justice Daniel Lewis who sentenced him to 14 years in prison. Clements, 24, of 114-40 203 Street in St. Albans, pleaded guilty on September 21, 2004, second-degree robbery before Justice Robert J. Hanophy and was sentenced to four years in state prison.

Assistant District Attorney Denise Tirino of the District Attorney's Homicide Trials Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Brad Leventhal, Bureau Chief and Jack Warsawsky, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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