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CONCLUSION OF QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S INVESTIGATION
FINDS NO CRIMINALITY IN THE DEATH OF YANG SONG;
MEDICAL EXAMINER RULED CAUSE OF DEATH AN ACCIDENT

Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown made public today the results of his Office's investigation into the death of 38-year-old Yang Song, who died following a fall from a fourth-story balcony on 40th Road in Flushing, Queens on Saturday, November 25, 2017. The results of the investigation are contained in a 27-page report and accompanying video (**a copy of both can be found at www.queensda.org**) which concludes that there were no police present in the apartment when Ms. Song fell to her death and that the Office of the Medical Examiner has ruled the cause of death accidental.

In November 2017, the NYPD's Vice Enforcement Squad was conducting a prostitution investigation at the 40th Road address and Ms. Song, who fell from the fourth floor, was a subject of that operation. As a result of Ms. Song's death, my office conducted a seven-month-long investigation which involved extensive interviews with numerous witnesses, including the undercover officer that interacted with Ms. Song, other members of the New York City Police Department's Vice Enforcement Squad at and near the scene and civilians in the area. The investigation also included extensive reviews of numerous video surveillance footage, audio recordings, the 911 call reports, the autopsy report and DNA analysis.

District Attorney Brown said, "The death of Ms. Song is sad and tragic. I have always maintained that prostitution is a degrading and humiliating industry and my office has long been at the forefront in helping those trapped in the sex industry find an escape through programs and assistance as an alternative to incarceration."

Continuing, the District Attorney said, "This investigation was aimed at learning what happened to Ms. Song and if anyone could be and should be held criminally responsible for her death. After a thorough and exhaustive investigation, we found that all the credible evidence in this case points to the inescapable conclusion that Ms. Song - in an attempt to flee the police - either accidentally fell from the fourth-floor balcony or jumped. Video surveillance shows the undercover officer, who had interacted with the woman in her apartment, was outside of the building and no other police officers had entered the apartment. In fact, when Ms. Song went over the balcony railing the undercover officer had exited the building and was walking on the sidewalk when she suddenly hit the ground just a few feet in front of him."

As set forth in District Attorney Brown's detailed report, the investigation revealed that neither the undercover police officer that interacted with Ms. Song in her apartment nor the NYPD Vice Enforcement Squad intentionally, recklessly or negligently engaged in conduct that caused the death of Ms. Song.

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“Under the circumstances,” District Attorney Brown said, “I believe that any fair and reasonable person would agree that no charges are warranted in this case. The investigation established that the undercover officer - nor any other police officer - was in the apartment with Ms. Song when she left the living room area and walked towards the balcony and either fell or jumped from the fourth floor. The extensive video surveillance and the audio recording corroborate the accounts of the police officers and other witnesses. I have an ethical duty to institute criminal charges only where there is probable cause to support them. This is not such a case.”

District Attorney Brown acknowledged the assistance throughout the investigation of the Force Investigation Division, the Crime Scene Unit of the New York City Police Department and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of the City of New York.

District Attorney Brown’s investigation was conducted by Assistant District Attorney Suzanne M. Bettis with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Robert S. Ciesla, Senior Chief of Operations, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Peter T. Reese, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney’s Homicide Investigations Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders and by Detective Investigators Perelene E. Kaalund and Douglas T. Lee of the Queens District Attorney’s Office Detective Bureau, under the supervision of Chief Investigator Franco Russo and Deputy Chief Investigator Robert J. Burke.

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NOTE: A copy of District Attorney Brown’s entire report, this press release and the video footage are posted at www.queensda.org.