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**MAN CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTED RAPE AND ASSAULT
IN ATTACK ON WOMAN INSIDE FOREST PARK**

*Victim Allegedly Shoved Off Walking Trail and Assaulted;
Defendant Faces Up to 25 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that a 32-year-old man has been charged with attempted rape and other crimes for allegedly assaulting a 51-year-old woman as she walked in Forest Park around 6:30 p.m. on July 25, 2020. The victim screamed and fought off her attacker as he pulled off her pants and got on top of her.

District Attorney Katz said, "A casual walk through one of the borough's parks turned into a living nightmare for this woman. She bravely thwarted being raped, but this kind of depraved violence should not happen in our parks or anywhere in our community. The defendant has now been apprehended and will be prosecuted for his alleged actions."

The District Attorney's Office identified the defendant as Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, 32, with no known address. The defendant was arraigned today before Queens Criminal Court Judge Toko Serita on a complaint charging him with attempted rape in the first degree, assault in the second degree, sexual abuse in the first degree and criminal obstruction of breathing or blood circulation. Judge Serita remanded the defendant and ordered him to return to court on August 28, 2020. If convicted, Cardenas faces up to 25 years in prison.

District Attorney Katz said that at approximately 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 25, 2020, Cardenas approached the woman, as she walked on a trail inside Forest Park and tapped her on the shoulder. As she turned towards him, the defendant allegedly struck her in the face and then attempted to kiss her. The sudden movement caused the woman to fall to the ground. The defendant is accused of dragging her into the bushes, pulling down her pants and getting on top of her. He is also accused of wrapping a cloth around the woman's neck and choking her. Her screams alerted a passerby which prompted the defendant to run off towards the nearby parkway.

The victim was immediately transported to a local Queens hospital, where she was treated for her injuries.

Senior Assistant District Attorney George Kanelopolous, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Eric C. Rosenbaum, Bureau Chief, Debra Lynn Pomodore and Brian C. Hughes, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. 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 on www.queensda.org