



MELINDA KATZ  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



718.286.6000  
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2020

**CONTACT: PRESS (718) 286-6315**  
[QDACommunications@queensda.org](mailto:QDACommunications@queensda.org)

**DA KATZ: RETIRED POLICE OFFICER WHO ALLEGEDLY FIRED SHOT**  
**INSIDE HOWARD BEACH RESTAURANT**  
**CHARGED WITH ASSAULT IN THE FIRST DEGREE**  
*Staten Island Defendant Allegedly Hit Innocent Bystander with Stray Bullet;  
Faces Up to 25 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that a retired police officer has been charged with assault in the first degree and other crimes for allegedly firing a gun inside a sushi restaurant in Howard Beach Tuesday evening during a verbal dispute with another patron. A stray shot hit an innocent bystander in the eatery.

District Attorney Katz said, “A verbal dispute could have turned deadly when this defendant allegedly lost control and fired his weapon – hitting an innocent bystander instead of his intended target. This kind of gun violence is unacceptable, particularly when the shooter is alleged to be a retired member of service. The defendant will now be held accountable for his alleged actions.”

The District Attorney’s Office identified the defendant as Dwayne Chandler, 52, of Staten Island. The defendant was arraigned this morning before Queens Criminal Court Judge Danielle Hartman on a complaint charging him with assault in the first degree, criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first and second degree. Judge Hartman set bail at \$20,000 bond/\$10,000 cash. Chandler’s next court date is July 24, 2020. If convicted, the defendant faces up to 25 years in prison.

According to the charges, said DA Katz, shortly after 7:20 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 2020, the defendant became embroiled in a verbal dispute with another patron inside a sushi restaurant on Cross Bay Boulevard. The exchange between the 2 men became heated and according to witnesses the defendant pulled out a firearm and suddenly a gunshot erupted.

Continuing, the DA said, according to the charges another man inside the restaurant heard the gunfire and immediately felt a sharp pain in his back. He was taken to an area hospital and currently has no sensation in his legs and is unable to move his toes, as a result of the bullet that pierced his back.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Anthony Davis of the New York City Police Department's 106<sup>th</sup> Precinct Detective Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Kenneth Zawistowski, of the District Attorney's Career Criminal Major Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Shawn Clark, Bureau Chief, and Michael Whitney, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

#

**Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org)**