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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025

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SQUATTER PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGALLY OCCUPYING FLUSHING HOME; FACES TWO YEAR PRISON TERM AT SENTENCING

Defendant Trespassed onto Vacant Property, Changed the Locks and Rented Out Rooms to Other Illegal Tenants in February 2024

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Brian Rodriguez has pleaded guilty to a felony for illegally occupying a single-family home in Flushing and renting out rooms to others early last year. When the homeowner regained access to the property and changed the locks, the defendant forced himself back inside the home and claimed that he was a legal tenant without proof. The case gained national attention due to the presence of a local news channel during the incident.

District Attorney Katz said: “This guilty plea and forthcoming prison term is a monumental achievement in our quest for justice on behalf of Queens homeowners. It needs to be abundantly clear: It is neither legal nor acceptable to enter someone’s home illegally and claim you have a right to stay. Due to the strong case built by my Housing & Worker Protection Bureau against this defendant, Brian Rodriguez has admitted guilt and is expected to be sentenced to two years in prison, plus five years post release supervision, for his unlawful actions.”

Rodriguez, 36, of 161st Street in East Flushing, pleaded guilty Tuesday to falsely reporting an incident in the second degree before Supreme Court Justice Leigh Cheng. He is expected to be sentenced to a determinate term of two years in prison and five years post release supervision on March 28.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges and investigation, on February 17, 2024, homeowner Adele Andaloro made a regularly scheduled stop to check on home located on 160th Street in Flushing. At the time, she discovered that the front door locks had been changed without her permission. She last visited the home on January 21, 2024, and the property was unoccupied and her key to the property worked.

After February 17, Andaloro observed Rodriguez inside her home several times. The property owner never met the defendant nor had given him permission to access the property.

On February 19, when confronted by Andaloro, Rodriguez claimed that he was leasing the property but did not specify a leasing company, individual or agent.

On February 29, the homeowner observed several others staying in her house without permission. After one of these occupants left the location with the front door ajar, Andaloro entered the property and observed that

several new locks have been added to the front door. She then called a locksmith and immediately changed the locks.

Later that same day, Rodriguez came to the location and forced his way into the residence by pushing the door open as the homeowner struggled to keep the door closed while ordering him to leave the premises.

When police officers arrived at the scene, Rodriguez claimed that he was a legal tenant being harassed by the owner trying to unlawfully evict him. Andaloro was then removed from the property.

Andaloro met with the Queens District Attorney's office and an investigation was launched by the District Attorney's Housing and Worker Protection Bureau.

The investigation was conducted by Investigator Dorsey M. McKeon and Sergeant Richard Lewis of the District Attorney's Detective Bureau, under the supervision of Lieutenant Alan Schwartz, and under the overall supervision of the Chief Investigator of the Detective Bureau Robert LaPollo.

Assistant District Attorney William Jorgenson, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Housing and Worker Protection Bureau is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Kathryn Ingle, and under the supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

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