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**MASSACHUSETTS MAN SENTENCED TO 12 YEARS IN PRISON AFTER SHOOTING WOMAN
OVER FAMILY DEBT**

Ambushed the Victim, Who Was Not Involved in the Dispute, in Broad Daylight in March 2023

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Minliang Zheng was sentenced to 12 years in prison after being convicted of assault and criminal possession of a weapon. In March 2023, Zheng approached a 45-year-old woman outside her home and shot her in the upper thigh over her relative's alleged unpaid financial debt. The victim had never met the defendant and was not involved in the alleged financial dispute. The defendant fled to Massachusetts after the shooting and was extradited to New York seven months later.

District Attorney Katz said: "The defendant shot the victim at point-blank range and in broad daylight simply to send a message. He then tried to flee the state to avoid any accountability. Thankfully, the victim survived, and my office was able to build a strong case which led to a jury conviction. We hope that today's sentencing allows the victim to heal and close the chapter on this senseless act of gun violence."

Zheng, 52, of Pope Street in Quincy, Massachusetts, was convicted of assault in the second degree and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree during a month-long jury trial which opened on May 5. The jury deliberated for approximately one hour before reaching a guilty verdict on June 9.

Queens Supreme Court Justice Karen Gopee, who presided at trial, sentenced Zheng today to 12 years in prison, to be followed by five years post release supervision.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges and trial testimony, on March 19, 2023, at approximately 12:30 p.m., the victim was loading laundry into her car, which was parked in front of her home on 229th Street in Flushing. Zheng approached the victim while wearing a hat and a surgical mask and demanded money, saying in sum and substance, "The boss said to get the money." The defendant then took out a semi-automatic gun and shot the victim in her upper thigh.

Nearby video surveillance footage depicted the shooting and the aftermath of the victim struggling to evade further assault from Zheng by closing her car door. The defendant yanked the car door open and threatened to shoot the victim's entire family if the money was not paid. He then fled the scene.

Subsequent investigation revealed that a gray Honda Odyssey van registered to Zheng had followed the victim earlier that morning as she left her house and drove to several nearby locations before the shooting. Cell site records obtained by the DA's office further evidenced Zheng's participation in the crime.

Zheng fled to Massachusetts where he was apprehended by local law enforcement on August 8, 2023. He was extradited to New York the following November.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Michael Rotanz and other members of the NYPD's 111th Precinct Detective Squad and Queens North Detective Bureau, with assistance from members of the NYPD Squad assigned to the Queens District Attorney's office as well as members of the Queens District Attorney's Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Leann Staines and Senior Deputy Bureau Chief Catherine Kane of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

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