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**DA KATZ WRITES TO STATE PAROLE BOARD TO OPPOSE RELEASE OF COP
KILLER**

*David McClary Convicted in 1989 in Execution of 22-year-old NYPD Officer Edward Byrne in
Marked Police Vehicle in South Jamaica*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz has written to the state parole board to urge the body to keep David McClary behind bars for the 1988 assassination of New York City Police officer Edward Byrne. The rookie cop was murdered as he sat in his patrol car guarding the South Jamaica home of a witness in a drug case.

District Attorney Katz said: “Nearly six years have passed since I wrote my initial letter in opposition to David McClary’s release and my position has not wavered. This execution was nothing short of an act of domestic terrorism designed to challenge the long established and universally accepted laws of civilized society. McClary and his accomplices killed an on-duty police officer in an attempt to disrupt the safety of our city on the most fundamental level. He should remain behind bars where he belongs.”

On the evening of February 26, 1988, Officer Edward Byrne was posted outside the home of a witness, tasked with the man’s protection after the witness received numerous threats from drug dealers against whom he was scheduled to testify. As Officer Byrne sat alone in his marked police car, McClary’s co-defendant Todd Scott approached the passenger side window to distract him, while McClary advanced from the driver’s side and fired his weapon five times just inches from Officer Byrne’s head. Byrne was killed instantly.

In June 1989 a jury convicted McClary of murder in the second degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. He was sentenced to indeterminate terms of 25 years to life for the murder and five to 15 years for the weapons conviction.

The brutal slaying was orchestrated by Phillip Copeland at the behest of local drug “kingpin”, Howard “Pappy” Mason. Copeland enlisted McClary, Todd Scott and Scott Cobb to carry out Officer Byrne’s execution. All three were convicted of murder. The parole board released Cobb in 2023.

After years of denials, McClary finally admitted that he was the shooter during a parole board hearing in July 2025. The board denied his request for release at that time.

The upcoming hearing will take place the week of October 19.

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