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**TWO MEN INDICTED BY QUEENS COUNTY GRAND JURY ON KIDNAPPING CHARGES
IN BOTCHED HOME INVASION IN RICHMOND HILL**

*Four Women and Baby Held Hostage at Gunpoint;
Defendants Face Up to 25 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz today announced that defendants Tex Ortiz and Wilbert Wilson have been indicted and arraigned in Queens Supreme Court on a 15-count indictment charging them with kidnapping, burglary and other crimes for allegedly taking five people hostage at gunpoint - including a nine-month-old infant - during a botched home invasion in Richmond Hill last month.

District Attorney Katz said, "The defendants in this case allegedly terrorized a family in the middle of the night and actually used one of the hostages as a human shield to keep police at bay when they responded to the emergency. This kind of lawlessness is reprehensible. The two men charged will face judgment in our Courts for their alleged actions."

Ortiz, 35, of First Avenue in Manhattan, and Wilson, 51, of Valentine Avenue in the Bronx, were arraigned today before Queens Supreme Court Justice Peter Vallone on the 15-count indictment. The defendants are charged with five counts of kidnapping in the second degree, burglary in the first degree, robbery in the first degree, two counts of robbery in the second degree, two counts each of criminal possession of a weapon in the second and third degree and endangering the welfare of a child. Ortiz is also charged with aggravated harassment in the second degree. Justice Vallone ordered the defendants to return to Court on February 11, 2021. If convicted, the defendants face up to 25 years in prison.

According to the charges, said District Attorney Katz, at approximately 8:40 p.m. on November 17, 2020, defendants Wilson and Ortiz allegedly used a crowbar to enter through a back door of the 125th Street home. Four women and a baby were inside the residence at the time. The two defendants allegedly demanded money from one of the victims, while three other hostages were ziptied and held at gunpoint. Another woman was pistol-whipped on the head causing her to fall into furniture while holding her infant daughter.

DA Katz said one of the victims managed to call 911 and when police arrived on the scene the young mother ran from the home clutching her baby daughter in her arms. At one point, the defendants forced one of the victims around the house to show them a way to escape. During this time, they used the victim as a human shield and forced the victim to yell at the police not to shoot.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Joseph Vertullo of Queens Robbery Squad with assistance from the New York City Police Department's 106th Precinct and Queens South Homicide Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Matthew Luongo 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, Michael Whitney, Deputy Bureau Chief, 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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