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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DA KATZ SEIZES UNLICENSED MOBILE CANNABIS DISPENSARY IN SUNNYSIDE**  
*Product Heavily Marketed Toward Children with Names Such As “Skittles” and “Gummy Sharks”  
Vehicle Impounded and All Product Seized*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced the takedown of an illegal cannabis dispensary operating out of a converted school bus in Sunnyside. The seized product was determined to have been overtly marketed toward children, with names such as “Skittles,” “Gummy Sharks,” “Jolly Ranchers,” and packaging nearly identically to snacks popular with kids. The vehicle’s owner has been charged with unlawful sale and unlawful possession of cannabis for allegedly operating the illegal business.

District Attorney Katz said: “You cannot operate a cannabis dispensary that is unregulated and marketed toward our children. Unlicensed marijuana sellers have become the subject of numerous community complaints because the unregulated product is often targeted to young people and has actually sickened customers. Such dispensaries also evade tax revenue for public services and undercut legal vendors who prioritize safety and compliance. My office will continue to crack down on illegal dispensaries that pose a serious threat to public health.”

Currently, there are 133 licensed adult recreational-use cannabis dispensaries open in New York state, including fourteen in Queens. There are 42 state-authorized medical marijuana dispensaries, including three in Queens.

Anthony Stevens, 62, of Brooklyn, NY was charged yesterday with unlawful sale of cannabis, unlawful possession of cannabis and criminal possession of cannabis in the third degree. The defendant received a desk appearance ticket and was ordered to return to court on July 2.

According to the charges, Stevens operated an unlicensed mobile cannabis dispensary called “The Green Empress,” on the corner of 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and Queens Boulevard in Sunnyside.

During the investigation, undercover detectives from District Attorney Katz’s office made controlled purchases of cannabis from the trucks on several occasions.

On June 12, detectives from the District Attorney’s office, along with NYPD officers, executed a court-authorized search warrant of the mobile dispensary.

The following was recovered from the truck, which was impounded:

- One cannabis chocolate bar
- Six disposable concentrated cannabis straws

- Several cannabis products packaged with candy names like “Skittles,” “Warhead Sour Medicated Chewy Cubes,” “Stoney Patch Kids,” “Gummy Sharks,” “Jolly Ranchers” and “Strawberry Puffs”
- Several Ziplock bags containing a quantity of cannabis

The seized products are estimated to be more than two pounds of cannabis.

This operation is part of the District Attorney’s ongoing efforts to rid Queens of illegal cannabis dispensaries, whether operating out of trucks and vans or brick-and-mortar commercial locations.

Since November 2022, enforcement operations have resulted in the prosecution of 286 individuals for felony-related charges related to the sale and/or possession of cannabis or controlled substances in Queens.

To date, the following items, with an estimated combined value of more than \$7 million, have been seized from more than 317 suspected illegal cannabis dispensaries:

- More than 1,800 pounds of cannabis edibles, including gummies and candy bars
- More than 2,500 pounds of cannabis flowers
- Hundreds of packages of edible psilocybin, also known as “magic mushrooms”
- Over 10,000 cannabis vape “pens”
- All of which has an estimated value of over \$7.5 million

District Attorney Katz has also initiated eviction proceedings pursuant to the Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law against 31 brick-and-mortar stores operating as illegal smoke shops.

A total of 79 shops in Queens County have been padlocked as of May 2024 through the assistance of the New York City Sheriff’s Office and the NYPD.

The investigation into the unlicensed mobile cannabis dispensary in Sunnyside was conducted by Assistant District Attorney Shanon LaCorte, Chief of the District Attorney’s Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau, with assistance from Supervising Intelligence Analyst Jennifer Rudy, along with members of the Queens District Attorney’s Detective Bureau under the supervision of Sergeant Felix Ramos, Lieutenant Joseph Falgiano, Deputy Chief Janet Helgeson, Assistant Chief Daniel O’Brien, and under the overall supervision of the Chief Investigator of the Detective Bureau, Robert LaPollo.

Assistant District Attorney Kieran Linehan, Supervisor, Major Narcotics in the Major Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, Assistant District Attorney Catherine Kane, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Scharf, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard Brave.

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*Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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