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**FAR ROCKAWAY WOMAN SENTENCED TO 18 YEARS IN PRISON FOR STRIKING MAN ON
SIDEWALK IN FATAL HIT-AND-RUN**

Victim was Seated on Walker and Unable to Escape Defendant's Path

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Kiani Phoenix was sentenced to 18 years in prison after pleading guilty to manslaughter for the death of 59-year-old Milton Storch in Far Rockaway in 2022. Phoenix, who had been arguing with another woman outside a deli, entered her car and accelerated toward the woman but instead hit Storch, who was seated on his walker on the sidewalk. She then hit a pedestrian and drove away from the crime scene.

District Attorney Katz said: "Kiani Phoenix made the deadly decision to get behind the wheel and aim her vehicle at another woman to settle their dispute. Tragically, an innocent man seated in a walker could not escape her path and lost his life. We cannot undo what happened, but hopefully this sentence brings a measure of comfort to Milton Storch's loved ones as they continue to mourn his loss."

Phoenix, 29, of Beach Channel Drive in Far Rockaway, pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the first degree on October 9 in full satisfaction of the charges against her. Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Holder sentenced her on Friday to 18 years in prison to be followed by five years of post-release supervision.

According to the charges, on August 27, 2022, at approximately 7 a.m., the defendant encountered a 27-year-old woman at a deli at 601 Beach 20th Street in Far Rockaway. An argument ensued and the two women became embroiled in a physical altercation outside the store. Several onlookers watched the women including 59-year-old Milton Storch who was seated on his walker in front of the deli. The bystanders attempted to separate the women and they stopped striking one another.

Phoenix then entered her Honda Accord, which was parked nearby. The defendant put the car in reverse and turned sharply to the right toward the 27-year-old woman and accelerated forward onto the sidewalk. Several people, including the woman, darted from the path of the car and escaped inside the deli. The defendant drove forward and struck Storch who was unable to rise from his walker. The car then stopped and accelerated in reverse and hit a 36-year-old pedestrian behind the car. Phoenix then sped away from the scene of the incident.

Storch was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced deceased. A second man was taken to the hospital and treated for back and hip injuries.

Assistant District Attorney Ryan Nicolosi of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, and Karen Ross and Jonathan

Selkowe, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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