



QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW 01 GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



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CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

STATEMENT OF QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ **ON MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO'S "SAFE SUMMER NYC" PLAN**

As we move forward to re-open our great City, one of our top priorities must be putting an end to the scourge of gun violence. The Mayor's Safe Summer NYC Plan puts forth a comprehensive, community-centered approach for a safe summer - and beyond - in my borough and throughout New York.

We need to be vigilant in our pursuit of the shooters and the drivers of gun violence and at the same time keep guns out of the hands of our young people. We need to keep the guns too easily purchased elsewhere -- in states such as Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia -- out of our City.

Throughout the long months of the pandemic, and despite the City-wide court shutdown during much of 2020 and this year, my office has continued to work closely with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the Office of Court Administration and the New York City Police Department to mobilize resources for the most serious gun cases. The Mayor's new NYC Joint Force to End Gun Violence should further enhance communication and coordination between city agencies, law enforcement and community groups.

With our first trial verdict last week and Courts scheduled to fully re-open on May 24, we are eager to move cases to resolution.

Yet even as we focus law enforcement efforts on those who prey on our most vulnerable, the gun traffickers and the drivers of gun violence and violent crimes, we cannot prosecute our way out of this problem.

Effective strategies for protecting our communities must be multi-faceted and the Mayor has put forth a wide-ranging plan that calls for investing in our communities and our young people with Cure Violence and other programs that have proven to be effective in reducing crime and violence. The safest borough is one where we work with our young people to make sure they never become part of the criminal justice system.

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