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MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: August 20, 2021
RE: Conviction of Benjamin Murdy

(Bel Air, Maryland) - Albert J. Peisinger, Jr., State's Attorney for Harford County, has announced that following a four-day bench trial in front of the Honorable Kevin J. Mahoney, Benjamin Murdy, 45, from Street, Maryland, has been convicted of five individual counts of attempted first degree murder and related charges as well as animal cruelty. The conviction follows a violent incident wherein Mr. Murdy fired approximately 200 rounds at Harford County Sheriff's Deputies. Sentencing has been set for December 6, 2021.

On January 21, 2020, at approximately 6:52 p.m., Corporal Brian Wyzga, Senior Deputy Jason Flemmens, Deputy Nathan Schnitzlein and Deputy Nicholas Lastner from the Harford County Sheriff's Office responded to the area of 4509 Oak Ridge Drive, in Street, Maryland for a report that Benjamin Murdy had shot the family dog and was in the house with the gun.

As the deputies moved towards the house, Mr. Murdy started shooting at them. The deputies took cover at various locations in the neighborhood, however, Mr. Murdy continued to fire shots at them for approximately 60 minutes. The deputies did not return fire. During the course of the encounter, Mr. Murdy shot Mr. Robert Schell, a neighbor across the street from the house, in the leg and groin as well as a patrol vehicle and truck.

Mr. Murdy then finally surrendered to the deputies. A search of his house resulted in the recovery of an AR-15 and a .40 caliber handgun. Casings and ammunition were also recovered. There were three fired casings in the backyard and 195 fired casings in the driveway. During the course of the search, the deputies also discovered Cora, the family dog, tied to the deck and shot multiple times.

During an interview, Mr. Murdy admitted shooting the dog because it would not stop barking. He further stated that he intended to kill the deputies as they approached the house.

"As this prosecution and today's ruling confirms, we are committed to holding accountable individuals who commit senseless violence towards the citizens of Harford County and our law enforcement partners," said Mr. Peisinger. Mr. Peisinger further stated: "This case is a stark reminder that law enforcement face extremely dangerous situations while keeping our communities safe. These deputies deliberately and selflessly put themselves in harms way to contain what could have been a very tragic situation. I applaud their actions and sincerely hope that Mr. Schell makes a full recovery."

Mr. Peisinger further thanked all responding Harford County Sheriff's deputies and emergency response personnel for their response and investigation and Assistant State's Attorney Charles Fitzpatrick for his advocacy that resulted in the conviction of Mr. Murdy.