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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 19, 2026

Re: State vs. Juan Quiroz-Manzueta

On Tuesday, May 19, 2026, Juan Quiroz-Manzueta, 22, of New York, entered a guilty plea in front of the Honorable Judge Kevin J. Mahoney in the Circuit Court of Harford County to one count of Attempted First Degree Murder, one count of Second Degree Burglary, one of count of Attempt by Driver to Elude Police in an Official Police Vehicle, and one count of Failing to Stop a Vehicle after an Attended Property Damage Accident.

Facts presented in support of the plea proved that on the morning of August 26, 2025, Lieutenant Robert Burgess observed a white Penske box truck driving erratically on Route 136 in Harford County. At that time, he activated his emergency equipment to initiate a traffic stop, the driver failed to stop and led law enforcement on a 36-minute vehicle pursuit across multiple roads in the county. During the pursuit, the driver of that vehicle, Juan Quiroz-Manzueta, drove recklessly at unsafe speeds, crossed over medians, and, most notably, traveled the wrong way on several occasions, including multiple times on Interstate 95. At a minimum, six cars were struck by the Defendant as he weaved in and out of traffic attempting to evade law enforcement, and failed to stop after any of those collisions. During that time, other deputies led the pursuit, and Lt. Burgess, later with the help of a Maryland State Police trooper, positioned themselves on Interstate 95 to deploy stop sticks in an attempt to stop the vehicle. As the Defendant approached, he deliberately avoided the tire deflation devices, striking civilian vehicles in the process. Lt. Burgess sought cover, and it was at that time that the defendant deliberately struck Lt. Burgess' vehicle, swerved directly at him and struck him, sending him 30 feet through the air and an additional 30-plus feet down the asphalt, nearly taking his life. The Defendant still failed to stop despite striking a human being and continued to flee. Eventually, Sgt. Henize of the Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) terminated the pursuit and safely conducted a Precision Immobilization Technique, which is a law enforcement tactic used to safely and forcefully stop a fleeing vehicle, guiding it off the roadway and into the woods. The Defendant exited his vehicle, fled through the woods and managed to further evade arrest at that time.

Investigation later revealed that the Defendant burglarized the Applebee's in Aberdeen and stole cooking oil from that location. He then attempted to steal additional cooking oil from the Royal Farms on Route 22. Both incidents occurred just prior to Lt. Burgess' attempted traffic stop on the vehicle. The Defendant was transporting the cooking oil in the truck as well as the hose he used to siphon the oil to steal it. Due to the swift and thorough investigation of the

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Harford County Sheriff's Office, the Defendant was immediately identified, located, and arrested the very next day in New Rochelle, New York.

As a result of the conviction, the Defendant was sentenced to Life in Prison, all suspended but forty (40) years to serve, which is a significant upward deviation from the recommended Maryland Sentencing guidelines of only fifteen (15) to twenty-five (25) years.

Following the hearing, State's Attorney Alison M. Healey held a press conference where she issued the following statement: "The sentencing guidelines in this case were only 15 – 25 years, which were completely insufficient for both the crimes the Defendant committed that day as well as the amount of peril in which the Defendant placed all of our citizens on the roadway that day. We are proud that we were able to obtain a sentence that is 15 years above the top of the sentencing guidelines and more than double the bottom of the range for the guidelines.

I want to significantly commend Detective Phillip Golden and the entire Harford County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division, as well as Detective Lightner and the Aberdeen Police Department Criminal Investigation Division, for their efforts in investigating this case. In addition, Harford County law enforcement and supervisors from all agencies countywide demonstrated sheer excellence in the team effort to bring this dangerous pursuit to a close. I cannot say enough how much I appreciate the sacrifices that our law enforcements make each and every day to ensure the safety of this county. They put their lives on the line for each and every one of us.

Most importantly, I am incredibly grateful to report that Lieutenant Burgess was able to be here with us today in Court to address the Court in a victim impact statement. He sustained significant injuries as a result of the Defendant's actions – a severe concussion and Traumatic Brain Injury, a collapsed lung with 12 displaced ribs and one broken rib requiring nine metal plates, a dislocated collarbone, a broken left forearm requiring a metal plate, four fractured vertebrae in his back, road rash covering his body, two large lacerations on his head, and additional internal bleeding. Despite those injuries, he thankfully survived this horrific incident. He will, however, be likely to deal with the lasting effects of his injuries for the rest of his life. His bravery and service to Harford County are to be honored.

As State's Attorney, I remain committed to my sole focus and priority, which is the public safety of Harford County and ensuring that dangerous offenders like Juan Quiroz-Manzueta face significant consequences for the threat they pose to our community. This is what the citizens of Harford County elected me to do, and we have repeatedly shown that we will stop at nothing to remove violent offenders from our streets. Today, we once again did just that. This sentence is a swift and certain message to those who contemplate committing crimes in Harford County. No sentence obtained in this case would ever be enough to compensate Lieutenant Burgess for the injuries he sustained that day. We are so fortunate that he did not lose his life that day protecting our community, but this is a reminder that all our law enforcement officers willingly do everything they can every day to protect our citizens. So, to all our law enforcement partners, I profoundly thank you for your service to Harford County. In the Circuit Court for Harford County, today, justice was served."