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**D.A. BROWN: HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER FACES
ADDITIONAL CHARGES IN SEXUAL ABUSE OF STUDENTS**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a former biology teacher at Cathedral High School in Manhattan accused last month of sexually assaulting two underage students in Queens has been charged with raping and sexually molesting three other underage high school students on five separate occasions in the Flushing and Long Island City sections of Queens.

District Attorney Brown said, "The charges are very disturbing. Most of the incidents are alleged to have occurred on school afternoons and, in at least two instances, either in front of or inside the residence of one of the students. The consequences of such sexual assaults on young women by an individual they trusted and into whose care they were entrusted by their families are profound and can result in emotional trauma from which they may never recover."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Richard Ali, 27, of 91-48 115th Street in Richmond Hill, Queens, who, until last month, was employed as a teacher at Cathedral High School, a Catholic college preparatory school for young women located at 350 East 56th Street in Manhattan.

Ali was arraigned late last night before Queens Criminal Court Judge Joseph Zayas on charges of second- and third-degree rape, second-degree criminal sexual act, endangering the welfare of a child and third-degree sexual abuse. The defendant, who faces up to seven years in prison if convicted, was ordered held on \$500,000 bail and to return to court on May 21, 2007.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, the defendant raped a female student under the age of sixteen at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, April 1, 2005, and then sexually abused her six days later on the afternoon of Thursday, April 7, 2005. The defendant is further charged with sexually abusing a second underage female student at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, November 10, 2006, and then raping and molesting her the following day, and raping her once more eight days later on Saturday, November 18, 2006. Finally, it is alleged that on Saturday, July 1, 2006, the defendant sexually abused a third underage female student. All of the incidents are alleged to have taken place in Queens County.

District Attorney Brown noted that Ali was charged on March 28, 2007, with the statutory rape of one student and the sexual abuse of a second student. Ali had been released on \$40,000 bail in that case and his next scheduled court appearance thereon is also May 21, 2007.

According to District Attorney Brown, an investigation began in March 2007 when one of the students informed a school guidance counselor of the alleged sexual abuse. The guidance counselor, in turn, reported the incident to the school principal, who then reported it to the police.

Assistant District Attorney Donna Marie Golia, who is assigned to the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau and serves as the Coordinator of the Queens Child Advocacy Center, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and Kenneth M. Appelbaum and Lucinda C. Suarez, Deputy Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on www.queensda.org