



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000**

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**CONTACT: KEVIN RYAN
NICOLE NAVAS
MERIS CAMPBELL
(718) 286-6315**

**D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN ARRAIGNED ON “HIT AND RUN” ASSAULT
OF CLOTHING STORE GUARD FOLLOWING SHOPLIFTING INCIDENT**

Faces Up to 25 Years in Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Springfield Gardens man has been arraigned on charges of participating in the robbery of a Jamaica, Queens, clothing store and thereafter critically injuring the store's security guard when he attempted to prevent the suspects from fleeing.

District Attorney Brown said, “The security guard, a recent immigrant and a hardworking father of two young daughters, is in the hospital on life-support after being struck by the defendant's vehicle and falling to the pavement, hitting his head. Instead of taking responsibility for his actions when confronted by authority, the defendant chose to run. He now faces felony assault charges, as well as robbery.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Philip J. Zabriskie, 53, of 172-44 133rd Avenue in Springfield Gardens. The defendant was arraigned today before Queens Criminal Court Judge Steven Paynter on charges of first-degree robbery, first-degree assault and a felony charge of leaving the scene of an accident without reporting. The defendant, who faces up to 25 years in prison if convicted, was ordered held without bail and to return to court on May 30, 2007.

The District Attorney said that, according to the charges, Zabriskie and two other unapprehended individuals participated in the theft of clothing and other items from the Pretty Girl clothing store, located at 162-21 Jamaica Avenue, at approximately 1:10 p.m. on Monday, May 14, 2007. As the three suspected shoplifters tried to make their escape in a Plymouth Voyager minivan that the defendant was allegedly driving, 52-year-old Awali Khouroupra, a security guard employed by the store, attempted to stop them by holding onto the hood of the getaway vehicle. The defendant then allegedly, with depraved indifference, began driving his vehicle in a reckless manner causing Mr. Khouroupra to fall to the pavement and strike his head. Mr. Khouroupra was transported to a local Queens hospital where he is being treated for a massive brain hemorrhage and is on life-support.

The investigation was conducted by the NYPD's 103rd Detective Squad and the Accident Investigation Squad of Highway Unit No. 3.

Assistant District Attorney Marissa B. Gillespie of the District Attorney's Homicide Investigations Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Peter T. Reese, Bureau Chief, Peter J. McCormack, Deputy Bureau Chief, and Richard B. Schaeffer, Supervisor and under the overall supervision of Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorneys for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely accusations and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: An e-version of this press release is posted on the QDA website at www.queensda.org.