



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

**RICHARD A. BROWN**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT: QDA PRESS OFFICE**  
**(718) 286-6315**

**STATEMENT BY  
QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY RICHARD A. BROWN  
ON ASSAULT CONVICTION OF HIRAM MONSERRATE**

While the court found the defendant guilty only of misdemeanor assault -- and not of felony assault -- I cannot quarrel with its decision. It represents the verdict of an experienced and fair and impartial fact-finder that the defendant physically abused his victim -- that the defendant engaged in an act of domestic violence.

The decision represents a victory for those of us who seek to prevent family violence and abuse -- and to punish those who engage in such conduct. And it more than justifies our prosecution of this case in spite of the victim's refusal to assist -- or in any wise cooperate -- with us in the prosecution.

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Domestic violence is a serious problem -- it must not be minimized -- and when it occurs it needs to be treated seriously and aggressively. Let me give you some statistics that make the point.

One in three women will suffer some form of physical abuse during her lifetime from someone she knows. Six million American women are beaten each year by their husbands or boyfriends. Four thousand are killed -- and children are abused in 70% of the households where domestic violence takes place.

According to our State's Division of Criminal Justice Services close to 50% of New York State's homicides last year involving women over the age of 16 as the victims were family related. On the other hand, only 4% of males over the age of 16 were killed by a family member.

And, finally, according to the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, the New York City Police Department responded to some 235,000 domestic violence incidents last year alone and our Family Justice Center has served 4,476 new clients seeking domestic violence services since it opened fifteen months ago.

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Those are the facts. They underscore the serious and pervasive problem -- with potentially life-threatening consequences -- presented by family violence and the need for all of us to redouble our efforts to put an end to violence in the home.

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Today's decision holds a batterer accountable for his actions. It sends a message to those who would abuse their intimate partners -- or their family members -- that violence in the home will not be tolerated and when it does, regrettably, occur, it will be aggressively prosecuted. Hopefully, it will make those who would physically abuse their spouses or partners think twice before they do so.

And, finally, it demonstrates the importance of our prosecuting these cases even without the cooperation or support of the victim who so often seeks -- due to fear, confusion or misplaced loyalty -- to withdraw from the case after the batterer is arrested only to thereafter find that the battering continues.

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The bottom line is that today has been a good day for those who are -- or who may hereafter become -- victims of domestic violence.

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