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PRESS RELEASE

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Staten Island Man Sentenced to Life in Prison for Murder of Two Young Children

***Following guilty verdict at retrial, judge sentences Michael Sykes to life in prison without parole for fatally stabbing the two young children of his girlfriend, Rebecca Cutler; Sykes also sentenced today to 25 years to life for attempted murder of a third child; Sykes currently serving a sentence of 26-and-one-third years to life for murder of Ms. Cutler*

STATEN ISLAND, NY – Richmond County District Attorney Michael E. McMahon today announced that MICHAEL SYKES was sentenced to two consecutive terms of life in prison without parole after previously being found guilty at trial of two counts of Murder in the First Degree for fatally stabbing his girlfriend's children, Ziana Cutler, 1, and Maliyah Sykes, 4 months. The defendant was also sentenced today to 25 years to life for the Attempted Murder in the First Degree charge regarding a third child, Miracle Cutler, during the same incident on February 10, 2016 inside the Ramada Inn on Staten Island. SYKES is currently serving a sentence of 26-and-one-third years to life after he was convicted at trial in November 2017 of Murder in the Second Degree for fatally stabbing his girlfriend, Rebecca Cutler, 26. He faced a retrial after a jury deadlocked on the charges with respect to the children.

SYKES, 27, was sentenced today in Staten Island Supreme Court, St. George, before Justice Mario F. Mattei. All of the sentences will run consecutive to each other.

“Michael Sykes deserves nothing less than to spend the rest of his life in prison without any hope of release for the monstrous acts he committed,” said **District Attorney Michael E. McMahon**. “This defendant caused one of the most tragic crimes Staten Island has ever witnessed when he viciously killed his girlfriend, Rebecca Cutler, and her two young children, Ziana and Maliyah. Ms. Cutler's other young daughter, Miracle, also suffered severe injuries at the hands of this defendant, but, thankfully, she survived his violent rampage and continues to show a strength and resiliency which has served as an inspiration for everyone in my office seeking justice on this family's behalf.”

McMahon continued, “This sentence finally puts an end to this tragic ordeal and I hope provides some closure to the family and friends of the victims. I would like to thank ADAs Lisa Davis and Michael Tannousis for retrying this case and ensuring justice was served for Ziana, Maliyah and Miracle. At the same time, I would like to commend ADAs Nina Spadafora and Ann Thompson for securing the original conviction in this case. I am very proud of my entire team for holding Mr. Sykes accountable for all of his brutal actions.”

On February 9, 2016, at approximately 4 p.m., at the corner of O’Connor Avenue and Victory Boulevard, the defendant forcibly stole the cell phone of Rebecca Cutler. On February 10, 2016 on or about and between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., inside of the Ramada Inn located at 535 North Gannon Avenue, the defendant repeatedly stabbed Rebecca Cutler about her body causing her to suffer over forty stab wounds and resulting in her death. On that same date, time and location the defendant also repeatedly stabbed two year old Miracle Cutler, one year old Ziana Cutler and four month old Maliyah Sykes repeatedly about their bodies, resulting in the deaths of Ziana and Maliyah and resulting in serious physical injury to Miracle Cutler.

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The case was prosecuted by ADAs Lisa Davis and Michael Tannousis.

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