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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**D.A. Thompson Announces New Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau  
Formed By Merging Gang and Major Narcotics Investigations Bureaus**  
*Focus On Combatting Gun Violence And Other Criminal Activity Associated  
With Gangs And Narcotics Organizations In Brooklyn*

Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson today announced the formation of a Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau that will bring together prosecutors with expertise in fighting gangs and drug organizations, and use multiple prosecution strategies, to systematically incapacitate and dismantle these dangerous and violent enterprises that are destroying lives and wreaking havoc in our communities.

District Attorney Thompson said, “The Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau will significantly increase our ability to save lives and protect communities in Brooklyn that have long suffered from gun violence, drug dealing and other criminal acts committed by gangs. I look forward to the success of this Bureau as it works to protect the people of Brooklyn from some of the most dangerous and violent criminals on our streets.”

The District Attorney said that long-term investigations will include a specific focus on targeting narcotics and firearms traffickers. The Bureau will also work closely with the DA’s Crime Strategies Unit to utilize the intelligence developed by that Unit about target organizations. It also will, at times, work closely with the Frauds Bureau, particularly the Cybercrimes Unit, to investigate and prosecute the increase in financial fraud associated with these organizations.

The District Attorney said that the Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau will be led by Assistant District Attorney Nicole Chavis, who is presently Chief of the Gang Bureau. Reporting to ADA Chavis will be two Bureau supervisors, Assistant District Attorney Patrick L. O’Connor, who will be responsible for managing the Bureau’s trial docket, and Assistant District Attorney Tara Lenich, who will have responsibility for managing its special investigations. Assistant District Attorney Lisa Berk will oversee day-to-day gang matters and Assistant District Attorney Maria Linares will oversee day-to-day narcotics matters.

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