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## ***COMMUNITY PARTNER IN JUSTICE NOTIFICATION***

### **Brooklyn District Attorney Moves to Vacate 20<sup>th</sup> Wrongful Conviction Paul Gatling, 81-Years-Old, Was Convicted of Murder in 1964**

Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson announced today that, as a result of a thorough investigation by his Conviction Review Unit, he moves to vacate a murder conviction against Paul Gatling, 81, who pleaded guilty during trial over fifty years ago in 1964 to escape a possible death penalty.

In the evening of October 15, 1963, police officers responded to a report that a man had been murdered inside of his Crown Heights home. The officers discovered the victim, a local painter and sculptor, to have been killed by a gunshot wound to the chest. The victim's pregnant wife and two children were present during the time of the shooting.

One month later, Paul Gatling became a suspect after detectives questioned another man over the course of several days, and he claimed to have seen Gatling in the vicinity of the building where the murder took place. Gatling's conviction was based heavily on unreliable eyewitness testimony, including from one witness who was known to have committed perjury previously.

The Conviction Review Unit determined that the defendant was deprived of his right to a fair trial based on several issues: suggestive and compromised identification procedures and the failure to provide the defense with key police reports, including a description of the shooter as being around 17 to 20 years old and the prior perjury by a key witness. No physical evidence linked Gatling to the murder.

District Attorney Thompson said, "Paul Gatling repeatedly proclaimed his innocence even as he faced the death penalty back in the 60s. He was pressured to plead guilty and, sadly, did not receive a fair trial. Today, 52 years later, he will be given back his good name and receive justice here in Brooklyn, where he once called home."