



**ALVIN L. BRAGG JR.,
DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**D.A. BRAGG ANNOUNCES TRIAL CONVICTION OF CORRECTIONS
CAPTAIN FOR NEGLIGENT HOMICIDE**

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin L. Bragg, Jr., announced today the trial conviction of former Department of Correction (“DOC”) Captain REBECCA HILLMAN, 40, for issuing orders that prevented officers from saving the life of Ryan Wilson, a person in custody at Manhattan Detention Complex (“MDC”), in November 2020. A New York State Supreme Court jury found HILLMAN guilty of one count of Criminally Negligent Homicide. She will be sentenced on April 3.

“Rebecca Hillman failed in her duty to provide for the safety of those under her watch as a Captain of the Department of Correction, causing the death of Ryan Wilson through her inexplicable negligence. Incarcerated individuals deserve to have their lives treated with dignity. I cannot imagine the pain that Mr. Wilson family and loved ones continue to feel, and I am deeply sorry for their loss,” said **District Attorney Bragg**.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, “Captain Hillman ignored her duty, and the plea of her subordinate officer, to provide immediate assistance to person in custody Ryan Wilson. Her callous inaction delayed emergency life-saving treatment for Wilson, who was dead by suicide by the time the medics arrived. Today’s conviction makes clear that we will vigorously pursue DOC employees of any rank who are responsible for the death of a person in custody in their care. I thank the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office for prosecuting this case and giving some measure of justice to Wilson’s family and the Department of Correction for its assistance in this investigation.”

As proven at trial, HILLMAN was a Department of Correction Captain in the unit where Ryan Wilson was assigned housing. On the afternoon of November 22, 2020, HILLMAN was planning to have Mr. Wilson moved to another housing unit after an argument with another incarcerated person. Mr. Wilson, who

remained locked in his cell pending the move, fashioned a noose out of a bedsheet and attached it to a light fixture. After calling an officer over, Mr. Wilson climbed on a stool, put the noose around his neck, and threatened to hang himself if HILLMAN would not come and let him out of his cell.

The officer attempted to calm Mr. Wilson and called HILLMAN to inform her that she was needed immediately in the housing unit. Instead, HILLMAN went into the control room, where she began filling out paperwork. After waiting for approximately 10 minutes, Mr. Wilson moved onto his bed, his neck in the noose, began a countdown, and jumped off the bed. The officer, who saw Mr. Wilson jump, called for the cell to be opened immediately so he could cut him down.

HILLMAN emerged from the control room and came up to the cell, which was opened. She ordered the same officer who had been standing at the door – and who was holding a tool to cut the noose Wilson had fashioned – not to enter and cut Mr. Wilson down, saying that he was fine and was “playing around.” She then casually looked inside and said that Mr. Wilson was faking it because he was still breathing. At this point, HILLMAN ordered that the cell door be closed, leaving Mr. Wilson hanging alone inside the locked cell. She left the area to do her usual work, including completing entries in a log book and walking around the unit.

About 15 minutes after Mr. Wilson jumped, HILLMAN finally gave the order to open the cell again and called for a medical team. Officers in the area cut Mr. Wilson down, felt a faint pulse, and began chest compressions. When medical personnel arrived a few minutes later, Mr. Wilson was already dead. The New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”) launched an investigation in accordance with its policy to investigate all deaths in correctional facilities.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant D.A.s Dafna Yoran (Senior Trial Counsel) and Matthew Sears with the help of Peter Casolaro (Senior Trial Counsel) and Sasha Hodson (Senior Digital Evidence Analyst) and under the supervision of Lisa DelPizzo (Chief of the Trial Division).

The investigation was conducted by DOI Deputy Inspector General Gladys Cambi, who was assisted by Deputy Inspector General Richard Askin under the supervision of Senior Inspector General Whitney Ferguson, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella and First Deputy Commissioner Daniel G. Cort.

D.A. Bragg thanked DOI for its assistance in this case.

Defendant Information:

REBECCA HILLMAN

Brooklyn, NY

Convicted:

- Criminally Negligent Homicide, a class E felony, one count