



Orange County News

For Immediate Release
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District Attorney Hoovler Announces Charges in Fatal Automobile Collision

*Kingston Man Charged With Killing 37 Year Old Passenger While Driving Intoxicated
and Under the Influence of Marijuana*

Defendant Arrested after Investigation by Grand Jury

Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler announced that on Friday, June 2, 2017, James Black, 29, of Kingston, was indicted by an Orange County Grand Jury and charged with crimes including, Vehicular Manslaughter in the First Degree, Manslaughter in the Second Degree, Operating a Motor Vehicle While Under the Influence of Alcohol and Operating a Motor Vehicle While Under the Influence of Drugs. The charges were filed in connection with the death of a 37 year old man who had been a passenger in Black's pick-up truck on December 22, 2016. At approximately 1:46 pm that day, Black was driving his pick-up truck on Quaker Street in the Town of Newburgh, when the truck left the roadway and collided into a tree, killing his passenger. It is alleged that Black was speeding and under the combined influence of both alcohol and marijuana at the time of the collision. The indictment alleges that his blood alcohol content was .19 per centum by weight of alcohol. Black, who also suffered injuries in the collision, was not immediately arrested, and the collision was investigated by the Town of Newburgh Police Department and an Orange County Grand Jury.

On June 2, 2017, Black was arrested on an arrest warrant issued by the Orange County Court and arraigned on the indictment. Orange County Court Judge Robert H. Freehill set bail in the amount of \$200,000 cash, or \$600,000 bond. Black currently remains incarcerated in the Orange County Jail and is next scheduled to appear in court on June 5, 2017.

District Attorney Hoovler thanked the Town of Newburgh Police Department for their investigation of the case and Black's apprehension.

“Deaths caused by intoxicated drivers are as tragic as they are preventable,” said District Attorney Hoovler. “There is no excuse for driving while intoxicated, and even less for driving while under the influence of both alcohol and other drugs. Those who drive while intoxicated, place the public, and themselves, at risk of death and other serious harm, and must be dealt with severely. I urge all who are tempted to drive in that condition to consider the consequences; not only of prison, but of knowing that you were solely responsible for the death of an innocent person, or a loved one. I thank the Town of Newburgh Police Department for their professionalism in handling this case and particularly for their working closely with my office in this investigation.”

This case is being prosecuted by Chief Trial Assistant District Attorney John Geidel.

A criminal charge is merely an allegation that a defendant has committed a violation of the criminal law, and it is not evidence of guilt. All defendants are presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial, during which it will be the State of New York’s burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

