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PRESS RELEASE

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Contact: Tom Pfeiff
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DATE: March 8, 2022

On March 7, 2022, the District Attorney presented evidence in the Superior Court at the preliminary hearing in the case of People v. Wapinder Kang (Merced Superior Court case number 21CR-03275A). Mr. Kang is a former Livingston Police Department Sergeant who stood accused of aiding and abetting the filing of a false police report in violation of Penal Code section 118.1 by directing a subordinate officer to include false and misleading information in his police report. The incident occurred July 3, 2021 and related to citations and a report for illegal fireworks. The District Attorney submitted body cam evidence and a police report authored by a junior officer in its effort to obtain an order from the court holding Mr. Kang to answer for trial.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the court declined to hold Mr. Kang to answer for trial and dismissed the charge. Merced County District Attorney Kimberly Lewis stated, "Although we do not agree with the judge's decision, we respect the court's ruling. It is the policy of this office, when evidence of public corruption that amounts to a crime is submitted to the District Attorney's Office, we will vigorously prosecute the case. Public matters like this case should be dealt with in a public forum."

A co-defendant, Harjinder Heer, also a former police officer, has a pre-trial hearing scheduled for March 25, 2022. Interim Chief Deputy District Attorney Tom Pfeiff is the prosecutor assigned to both cases.