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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Schuylkill Township Man Murders Girlfriend,  
Crime Recorded by Victim**

Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan announced the filing of charges against defendant Keith Smith for shooting and killing his girlfriend Wesley Webb on May 2, 2016 at their residence in Schuylkill Township, Chester County. After a domestic argument, the defendant pulled a shotgun and shot the victim once in the chest. The defendant then attempted but failed to commit suicide. The victim audio recorded the murder on her phone.

District Attorney Hogan stated, "This was a savage, selfish, and cowardly murder. The defendant did not hesitate to kill his girlfriend. But he flinched when it came to killing himself. Now, the victim is dead, the defendant is alive, and three kids have been badly traumatized."

Schuylkill Township Police Chief James Fetterman stated, "Schuylkill Township has not had a homicide in decades. We are a safe community, making this crime jarring for our township. However, our police, the Chester County Detectives, and neighboring jurisdictions did an outstanding job of responding rapidly to a chaotic scene and conducting a thorough investigation."

District Attorney Hogan added, "The defendant was focused on killing his girlfriend. He callously ignored the fact that he was killing somebody who also was a mom, a sister, and a daughter."

The facts alleged in the criminal complaint are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

On May 2, 2016, defendant Keith Smith was residing with victim Wesley Webb at 322 Buckwalter Road, Schuylkill Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania. Also living at the residence were three juveniles, all under the age of 14.

In the evening of May 2, the defendant and the victim were engaged in a verbal domestic argument at the residence. The victim decided that she was going to take two of the children and leave the residence. The defendant and the victim then engaged in a further verbal argument in the living room of the residence.

The victim was seated on a couch in the living room. The defendant grabbed his single-shot 12 gauge shotgun. The defendant shot the victim once in the chest, killing her. The defendant then re-loaded and turned the shotgun on himself. The defendant shot himself in the face, but failed to kill himself.

The three children were upstairs in the residence during the shooting. The children came downstairs and discovered the shooting scene. One of the children immediately called 911. Police responded to the residence within minutes, at approximately 11:30 p.m. The defendant stated that he shot the victim and tried to kill himself. The victim was already dead. The defendant was transported to a hospital for treatment.

Just before she was shot and killed, the victim activated an audio recording program on her phone. The recording captured the defendant killing the victim and continued through the arrival of the police. On the recording, the defendant states, "You want to record it now, bitch?" Then there is the sound of the defendant shooting the victim. After the shooting, the defendant states to the victim, "Fuck you! How's that. That's where we just went."

The defendant is charged with first degree murder, third degree murder, possessing an instrument of crime, and endangering the welfare of children. The defendant currently is being treated at a hospital, where he is in stable condition. Because of the nature of the charges, the defendant is ineligible for bail. He will be transferred to Chester County Prison when he is medically cleared.

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<sup>1</sup> A criminal defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.

District Attorney Hogan added, “This case is a tragic example of technology and the law catching up to criminals. Until 2012 in Pennsylvania, a victim’s recording of her own murder would have been inadmissible under the Pennsylvania Wiretap Act. This law was changed in 2012, fixing a glaring omission. But that is slight solace for the children and family of the victim in this case.”

This case was investigated by the Schuylkill Township Police Department and the Chester County Detectives. Significant assistance was provided by the Phoenixville Police Department, East Pikeland Police Department, West End EMS, Trappe EMS, and the Crime Victims’ Center of Chester County. The assigned prosecutors are Alex Gosfield and Basil Joy. Anybody with any further information should contact Chester County Detective Christine Bleiler at (610) 344-6866.

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Approved for release:

Thomas P. Hogan