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**PLYMOUTH COUNTY DA CRUZ ANNOUNCES 2018 HOMICIDE, OVERDOSE
STATISTICS FOR COUNTY**

BROCKTON – State Police Detectives assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney’s Office investigated 10 homicides and responded to 112 suspected fatal drug overdoses in 2018, according to Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz.

In 2018, State Police Detectives assigned to the District Attorney’s Office responded to a total of 10 homicides in Plymouth County. In 2017, State Police responded to nine homicides. That number does not include motor vehicle homicides.

“I commend State Police Detectives assigned to the District Attorney’s Office who work together with local police and federal authorities to solve these murders, investigate violent crimes and take guns and drugs off of our streets,” DA Cruz said. “We remain focused on eradicating gun violence and the deadly heroin and fentanyl drug markets to improve the quality of life for residents throughout Plymouth County.”

State Police additionally responded to 112 fatal suspected overdoses in towns and cities in Plymouth County, with 81 of the victims being male, and 31 being female. In 2017, State Police responded to a total of 138 suspected overdoses in the county for the year.

“The number of fatal overdoses that State Police responded to are down from last year and we are making strides, but we have work ahead of us,” DA Cruz said. “The Plymouth County Drug Abuse Task Force and PCO are efforts that I am proud to be part of and I look forward to continuing to collaborate until we get well out in front of this addiction issue.”

In 2015, DA Cruz along with Plymouth County Sheriff Joseph McDonald formed the Plymouth County Drug Abuse Task Force, an effort to engage all community sectors to work on the opioid issue. The Drug Abuse Task Force brings law enforcement, the medical community, educators and substance abuse experts together to share information and track the current trends of the opiate epidemic. Out of the task force emerged

Plymouth County Outreach (PCO), the county-wide effort to reach overdose victims and their families and get them the support and services they need in the critical hours after an incident. PCO is led by East Bridgewater Police Chief Scott Allen and Plymouth Police Chief Michael Botieri, and is made up of 27 municipal police departments in Plymouth County, along with the Bridgewater State University Police.

This year, State Police Detectives assigned to our office were able to use cell phone technology to secure our first manslaughter conviction against a defendant who supplied the drugs in the fatal overdose of a 25-year-old woman. In another first for Plymouth County, we are currently operating drug court sessions in each of our district courts – Plymouth, Brockton, Hingham and Wareham. Drug courts and our diversion program offer alternatives designed to rehabilitate, rather than incarcerate.

There are 62 Assistant District Attorneys who work in the Plymouth District Attorney's Office. The various attorneys prosecute in the two Superior Courts in Brockton and Plymouth, work as part of the Appellate Unit within the office, and are assigned to District Courts in Brockton, Hingham, Plymouth and Wareham.

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