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**DA CRUZ, MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE, PEMBROKE POLICE
ANNOUNCE NEW DNA INFORMATION IN 1984 UNSOLVED HOMICIDE**

PEMBROKE – Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz, Massachusetts State Police and Pembroke Police today announced that they have developed information leading them to a suspect in a previously unsolved 1984 murder case.

On February 13, 1984, 59 year-old Virginia Hannon was found strangled and stabbed to death in her home on West Street in Pembroke. Since the date of her murder, Massachusetts State Police and Pembroke Police have worked to solve this case. Police interviewed witnesses, analyzed and tested evidence found at the crime scene, conducted DNA testing and retested items as DNA science evolved and improved over the years. State Police fielded tips, and used forensic genealogy testing through the MSP Crime Lab.

In May 2018, Plymouth County District Attorney's Office (PCDAO) worked with a forensic scientist and chemist from the Massachusetts State Police Crime Lab advised that PCDAO perform additional rounds of testing on various items taken from the crime scene, including broken glass from the door, nylon stockings and bloody paper towels.

After an exhaustive testing process, in January, 2019, PCDAO learned that the male DNA profile found on items from Hannon's kitchen that were directly related to murder, were all from the same unknown man. PCDAO pursued Y-STR genetic genealogy testing using DNA testing technology companies Identifinders and Parabon Nanolabs. Neither companies were able to detect information identifying this unknown male.

Last year, Pembroke Police received a tip from a person who reported that in early 2019, a man named Jesse Aylward told him that he had killed a person in Pembroke many years ago. The man went on to say that Aylward died the day before in February, 2020.

Investigators preserved a DNA swab from a deceased Aylward, (DOB: 03/09/1961). Detectives searched a dwelling off Crescent Street in Brockton where Aylward was believed to have been living. State Police Detectives assigned to PCDAO sought a warrant to obtain the blood of Aylward from Brockton Hospital and it was transported to the MSP Lab where analysts were able to determine Aylward's DNA profile, which was then compared to the DNA found on the crime scene evidence and it was a match.

Parabon Nanolabs continued to test other items from the crime scene and on March 4, PCDAO was notified that testing had concluded and no additional suspects were identified.

“I would like to commend the devoted work of law enforcement, Chief Wall, Det. Sgt. Cain, Massachusetts State Police and Trooper Michael DiMarzio, the State Police Crime Lab, Pembroke Police, and Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Sprague -- for their diligent efforts over 37 years of pursuing Virginia Hannon's murderer. My condolences go out once again to the Hannon family for their loss. I am hopeful that they finally find some peace and closure with this news.”

The PCDAO has an Unsolved Homicide Unit dedicated to re-examining existing evidence and conduct further investigation using modern technologies and techniques. Anyone with information on a homicide is urged to contact the hotline at 508-894-2584.