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## **Family of Houston Police Department ‘No-Knock’ Raid Victims: Independent Investigation Refutes City’s Claims About Harding St. Killings**

HOUSTON, July 25, 2019 – Preliminary findings of the ongoing independent investigation of the killings of Rhogena Nicholas and Dennis Tuttle by the Houston Police Department refute the initial and uncorrected claims about the deadly incident by HPD and the Houston Police Officers’ Union, Doyle LLP and St. Martin & Bourque LLC law said today.

The lawyers for the family of Rhogena Nicholas also filed a petition in Harris County probate court today seeking a court order for sworn depositions HPD Captain Paul Q. Follis and HPD Lieutenant Marsha Todd, HPD police department personnel involved in the management of HPD Narcotics Squad 15. In seeking the depositions, the Nicholas family updated developments in their ongoing independent investigation of the Jan. 28, 2019, including preliminary findings by forensics scientist Michael Maloney and his team:

- Rhogena Nicholas was fatally struck by a bullet from a weapon fired outside her home by a person unable to see her. This casts doubt on HPD claims that she was shot during a struggle inside the home for a police weapon.
- An unidentified person held a weapon against the inner dining room wall of the home and fired two shots into the wall, as confirmed by chemical testing.
- Approximately 30 minutes after the raid was reportedly concluded, two lone gunshots were recorded on cellphone video, followed by HPD personnel repeatedly said, “Both suspects down.” About an hour later, HPD personnel were heard “negotiating” with “suspects.”
- HPD claims that the residence was a confirmed black tar heroin “drug house” are refuted by department records.

Attorney Michael Patrick Doyle of Doyle LLP, in Houston, “The City’s story does not line up with the physical facts at the Harding Street home. The evidence and HPD’s refusal to disclose even the most basic information, such as 911 records, raise more trouble questions every day. We believe the court has sufficient basis to order the depositions requested to investigate the wrongful death, civil rights, and other claims arising from these killings by HPD.”

Attorney Charles C. Bourque, of St. Martin & Bourque LLC, in Houma, La., said, “Our investigation remains focused on the conduct and claims of HPD before, during, and after the out-of-control and unjustified attack on Rhogena at her home. We say again: Rhogena Nicholas did not deserve to be executed in her own home by HPD.”

John Nicholas, the brother of Rhogena Nicholas, said, “Our family’s search for the truth of what happened to Rhogena continues. We’re pursuing this on our own because the City of Houston is now fighting us. This followed silence from the police chief and mayor. Through our independent investigation, the family is committed to helping protect the community and other families from continuing to face terrible ordeals like this one.”