



# NEWS RELEASE

## OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

For Immediate Release:

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### **Laurel Man Pleads Guilty to Negligent Manslaughter in July 2016 Auto Accident**

Laurel man has pleaded guilty to the negligent manslaughter of a Gaithersburg man as a result of a three-car collision on I-95 near Jessup last summer. Caleb Aaron Wright, 28, of the 8200 block of Marylee Lane, pleaded guilty to negligent manslaughter by auto vehicle in Howard County Circuit Court this morning.

Assistant State's Attorney Danielle Duclaux told the court that shortly before 3 a.m. on July 24, 2016, Jose Santos Gomez, 68, drove his car onto the shoulder of northbound I-95, just north of the MD Rt. 175 interchange. He and one of his two passengers were retrieving a phone charger from the trunk when Wright's car struck Gomez' car and both men. State police investigators determined that Wright's Acura TL was traveling at 82 mph and continued almost 300 feet north of the initial impact when it was hit by a minivan. Gomez was unconscious and suffering from extensive trauma to his torso and lower extremities. He was transported to the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center where he was pronounced dead.

Duclaux stated that the responding Maryland state trooper suspected that Wright was driving under the influence of alcohol and administered a field sobriety test which Wright failed. He was placed under arrest and transported to Howard County General Hospital, complaining of injuries, where a blood alcohol test registered a .12. The legal limit is .08.

The second passenger in Gomez' vehicle was his wife who was present in the courtroom during the plea hearing this morning.

Judge Timothy J. McCrone set a sentencing date of April 24, 2017. Duclaux told the court that she will seek a 10-year sentence, suspending all but 8 years, along with five years of probation plus 300 hours of community service.