



# NEWS RELEASE

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

Contact: Yolanda Vazquez  
410-313-2108

[yvazquez@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:yvazquez@howardcountymd.gov)

For Immediate Release:

### Baltimore Woman Who Threatened Driver with a Gun in a Road Rage Incident Pleads Guilty

Howard County, MD (December 10, 2019) – Michelle Hutson, age 29, of Baltimore, MD pleaded guilty today to Assault in the First Degree before Howard County Circuit Court Judge Richard S. Bernhardt and was sentenced to five years in prison suspending all but six months.

On May 25, 2019 at approximately 8:30pm, a Maryland State Trooper was dispatched to an area north of I-95 at Montgomery Road in Howard County for a report of a road rage incident involving a handgun. The trooper interviewed the victim of the road rage incident who said that as she changed from lane to lane on I-95, the driver of another vehicle, Michelle Hutson, turned on her high beam lights and began to tailgate her. As the victim increased her speed, Hutson followed closely behind her. The victim started weaving through traffic and lost sight of Hutson's vehicle for about 30 seconds until Hutson caught up with her. The victim changed lanes again and tried to drive away from Hutson, but as the victim passed Hutson's vehicle she saw Hutson pointing a gun out the window at her. The incident was captured by the victim on her cell phone with two distinct screenshots - one identifying the vehicle driven by Hutson and the other identifying Hutson as the driver who was brandishing the handgun with her finger on the trigger (see attached photo).

Law enforcement officials went to Hutson's home in Baltimore City early in the morning on May 26th where they retrieved the handgun that Hutson used in the road rage incident. While in Hutson's bedroom, police encountered James Flythe, Hutson's boyfriend. He was in the vehicle, on the passenger side, during the road rage incident involving Hutson. Flythe told police the handgun, which he lawfully possessed through his job as an armed security guard, was in his backpack. After obtaining consent from Flythe, police retrieved the 9mm handgun from his backpack. Hutson told police that she knew the gun was not loaded at the time because a bullet did not discharge when she pulled the trigger while pointing the gun at the roof of her own vehicle. Hutson told police that she knew her actions were wrong.

In response to today's guilty plea, State's Attorney Rich Gibson commented, "We have all experienced road rage in some way, shape, or form, but for Ms. Hutson to deliberately point a potentially, deadly weapon in the direction of our victim takes this incident to a new level. No one should have a gun, loaded or unloaded, pointed at them and be in fear of their life while driving on the highway. And we are grateful Ms. Hutson's reckless and dangerous actions didn't result in a more catastrophic outcome."

As part of the plea agreement, Hutson was placed on two years of supervised probation, must complete mental health treatment, is required to pay court fines and will have no contact with the victim. Upon conviction of this offense, Hutson will be prohibited from legally possessing any regulated firearms.

Assistant State's Attorneys Dillon Yeung and Katherine Bagley prosecuted the Hutson and Flythe cases.

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