For immediate release: May 12, 2022

FIRE ORIGIN AND CAUSE INVESTIGATION
FOR FATAL NEW HAVEN FIRE FROM MAY 2021 COMPLETED

The Connecticut State Police Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit has concluded the investigation of a residential structure fire that occurred on 05/12/2021 at 190 Valley Street in the City of New Haven that resulted in the Line of Duty Death of New Haven Firefighter Riccardo Torres, Jr.

On 05/12/2021 at approximately 0044 hours, the New Haven Public Safety Telecommunication Center received the first of three “911” calls reporting a fire at 190 Valley Street in the City of New Haven. The New Haven Fire Department was dispatched to the working structure fire and was soon notified that there was a party entrapped within the building. Through the heroic efforts of the responding New Haven Firefighters and Police Officers, an elderly female occupant was rescued from the first floor of the two family residence. Conditions within the structure rapidly deteriorated as firefighters attacked the fire. During the fire suppression efforts, Firefighter Ricardo Torres Jr. initiated radio transmissions that indicated he was under duress. An immediate rescue effort was initiated and Firefighter Torres was pulled from the second floor of the structure but was unresponsive, and later pronounced deceased after being transport by ambulance to Yale New Haven Hospital. Lieutenant Samod Rankins was also rescued from the structure and sustained serious injuries requiring a lengthy recovery.

The fire origin and cause investigation determined that the fire originated in the basement of the structure and spread to the first and second floors causing severe fire and collapse damage. Due to the extent of damage and lack of physical evidence, the cause of the fire was not able to be determined. There is no criminal aspect.

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