



# PRESS RELEASE

MIKE SCHMIDT, District Attorney for Multnomah County



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## **District Attorney Mike Schmidt appoints outside co-lead prosecutor**

[Click here to download the District Attorney's video remarks](#)

PORTLAND, Ore. – Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt announced the appointment of Samuel Kauffman, a private practice attorney, to serve as a co-lead prosecutor to review the death investigation of Israel Berry, who died after a Gresham Police officer shot him on May 31, 2020.

Attorney Kauffman will work with current Multnomah County prosecutors in conducting a prosecutorial review of this case. The pursuit of justice in this case will be augmented by adding Mr. Kauffman to our team of prosecutors as we continue to investigate this case and present it to the grand jury. Mr. Kauffman has agreed to participate in the preparation and presentation of the case to the grand jury and, if an indictment is returned, to assist with the trial.

It is expected that the state will present this case to the Multnomah County grand jury within the next 3-5 weeks.

The findings of the grand jury will be made public, as they always have.

District Attorney Mike Schmidt released the following statement:

**“No matter the legal outcome of an investigation or prosecution of an officer’s use of deadly force, the process of investigation itself can result in significant trauma to a community that can last for years. These cases demand the highest possible degree of transparency and objectivity.**

**As Multnomah County District Attorney, I believe in the importance of having the investigation of an officer’s use of deadly force be separate and independent from the involved agency. While I believe whole-heartedly in the professionalism of my prosecutors, we work side-by-side with the Gresham Police Department on a day to day basis and have strong working relationships with the officers who work there. Asking that an outside prosecutor provide an objective review removes any actual or perceived conflicts of interest**

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**which can occur when the district attorney reviews the actions of an agency that works within their jurisdiction.**

**Consistent with these beliefs, I will continue to invite the participation of objective legal experts in the investigation and prosecution of cases involving the deadly use of force by law enforcement. I look forward to working with community members, policymakers and other stakeholders to further develop systems of accountability and transparency in these crucially important investigations.”**

Under Oregon’s Rules of Professional Conduct, Mr. Kauffman is prohibited from making any public statement on the facts of this investigation.

Any future media statements will be released by Mr. Kauffman through the Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office. Media inquiries should be directed to the Multnomah County District Attorney’s Communications Director.

Mr. Kauffman has nearly 25 years of experience as a criminal defense lawyer in state and federal courts and before administrative agencies.

No additional information can be released by the Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office or Mr. Kauffman at this time.

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