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City Attorney Zach Klein Announces Charges for Motorist Who Struck and Killed Four-Year-Old Girl Trick or Treating in October

City to pursue vehicular manslaughter, vehicular homicide charges against driver of a pickup truck that barreled through crosswalk that had its pedestrian crossing flashers activated, striking and killing a young girl

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced charges for the driver of a pickup truck that struck and killed a four-year-old girl and severely injured an adult as the two crossed an intersection on the northeast side of Columbus while trick-or-treating Halloween night. The City Attorney's Office announced charges of vehicular manslaughter and vehicular homicide against Lazaro Robles Becerra of Columbus, the 50-year-old driver of the pickup truck.

“Anyone who operates a vehicle carelessly or recklessly on our city streets will be held accountable, especially if that operation threatens public safety or results in injury or the tragic loss of an innocent life,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“As a parent, my heart breaks for both the victim and family, and while nothing we do can bring this little girl back, we will do everything in our power to hold the individual accountable and deliver some sense of justice to the family.”**

On the evening of Oct. 31, during the City's trick or treat hours, Mr. Becerra ran through the intersection of Westerville Rd. and Valley Park Ave., striking the four-year-old girl and the adult accompanying the child, who were in the intersection while the crosswalk had its flashers activated so pedestrians could cross. The four-year-old's mother was walking behind. Emergency personnel arrived on scene within minutes, providing emergency medical care to the victims. The child was later declared deceased after transport to Nationwide Children's Hospital.

“This is a tragic situation that was entirely avoidable, and now a family is going through the holiday season without their four-year-old daughter,” said Joseph Gibson, the City's Chief Prosecutor. **“There is no greater priority than public safety, and the City will continue to aggressively prosecute those who threaten the safety of families, children and all Columbus residents.”**

Under the charges laid out by city prosecutors Monday, the defendant could face up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The charges come as city officials have responded to a recent string of high profile crashes, which have led to a number of injuries, fatalities and property damage.

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