



# Huntington Beach Police Department

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Eric Parra, Chief of Police

## Press Release

**Prepared by:** Jennifer Carey, Public Affairs Manager

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## Huntington Beach Police Department Makes Arrest for Murder in Relation to September 11, 2021 Traffic Collision Related Death

On Wednesday, February 2, 2022, the Huntington Beach Police Department (HBPD) arrested 22-year old John Murray III, a male resident of Huntington Beach, for murder in the traffic collision related death of 22-year old Meghan Wautlet of Huntington Beach.

On Saturday, September 11, 2021, at approximately 8:17 p.m., the HBPD responded to a traffic collision on Pacific Coast Highway, south of Warner Avenue, involving a motorcycle and a SUV. Upon arrival, officers located the motorcycle passenger, Meghan Wautlet, deceased at the scene. The motorcycle driver, John Murray III, was found in the roadway with significant injuries and transported to a local hospital for treatment.

Traffic investigators from the HBPD Major Accident Investigation Team (MAIT) conducted an exhaustive investigation into the circumstances surrounding the collision and determined that Murray was recklessly operating his motorcycle with Wautlet as his passenger. Prior to the collision, Murray was driving his motorcycle at a high rate of speed and performing dangerous stunts which contributed to the cause of the collision.

In the seven-month period prior to the collision, Murray had been cited or arrested five times for traffic-related charges including speeding and reckless driving. Additionally, Murray was involved in at least three separate at-fault collisions during which he was unsafely operating his motorcycle.

This incident serves as a stark reminder on the importance of driving responsibly and following all traffic safety laws. Speeding remains one of the primary causes for collisions and is a factor in more than 30% of all fatal and injury collisions in California. The Huntington Beach Police Department, in partnership with the California Office of Traffic Safety and other local, state, and federal agencies, continues to address ongoing traffic safety issues, including speeding and reckless driving, through directed enforcement and education. We remain committed to holding those in violation of laws accountable for their actions and working towards the goal of eliminating preventable roadway deaths.

Anyone who may have witnessed the collision or has additional information relating to it is encouraged to contact HBPD Traffic Investigator V. Rattanchandani at (714) 536-5231 or [VRattanchandani@hbpd.org](mailto:VRattanchandani@hbpd.org).