



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## NORFOLK DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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## Press Release

### Daniel Bennett named independent prosecutor To handle American Legion Post prosecutions

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District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey has appointed Attorney Daniel Bennett as independent special assistant district attorney to prosecute the manslaughter and other indictments against Matthew Potter and the assault indictments facing Steven Potter arising from the events at the Nickerson American Legion Post in Quincy in January 2019 that ended in the death of Christopher McCallum.

"My purpose here is to remove any question or appearance of conflict while placing the case with a prosecutor of extensive experience and skill," District Attorney Morrissey said.

As Independent Special Assistant District Attorney, Bennett will have full autonomy in the prosecution of the case, District Attorney Morrissey said. Before serving as Massachusetts Secretary of Public Safety and Security, Bennett served as First Assistant District Attorney in Worcester County, being recognized as Massachusetts Prosecutor of the Year by his peers in 2013. He also served as senior trial counsel in the Middlesex District Attorney's Office and served in the Suffolk DA's Office.

"The independent prosecutor statute exists to avoid both actual conflict of interest or the appearance or perception of conflict of interest, at any stage in a prosecution or investigation," District Attorney Morrissey said in making the announcement. The appointment of an independent prosecutor removes any involvement in the ongoing decision-making process from the Norfolk District Attorney's Office and puts it directly in the hands of the independent counsel.

"There has been no single precipitating factor in my decision to assign this to an independent prosecutor," Morrissey said.

"While there is no direct conflict of interest, I have grown increasingly aware of the perception, particularly within the Squantum community, that public confidence will be reinforced with this matter placed with an independent prosecutor."

Morrissey thanked the Massachusetts State Police detectives who conducted interviews and investigation across several months. "This matter was brought through the grand jury process by one of my most experienced and senior prosecutors and I feel fortunate that the prosecution will be undertaken by an attorney of Daniel Bennett's caliber and experience."