



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Press Release

Landlords sent to prison in fatal 2009 Fire

DA Morrissey & Fire Marshall working together to prevent future tragedies

The landlords convicted of manslaughter last month in the 100 Robertson Street fire killed a city father and his two sons in 2009 have been sent to prison, according to District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey.

Morrissey and State Fire Marshall Stephen Coan, flanked by Quincy Police Chief Paul Keenan and Fire Chief Joseph Barron, spoke to the press following the sentencing hearing for the two brothers at Norfolk Superior Court last Thursday. The DA and Fire Marshall revealed that they have begun working together on steps to stop landlords from renting the kind of illegal apartments that turned into a death trap on Robertson Road on March 25, 2009.

“Andy Huang was sentenced to 3 years to 3 years and 1 day in State Prison and his brother Jason was sentenced to 2 to 3 years in prison, followed by 3 years of probation each,” District Attorney Morrissey said. “We requested state prison terms of 12 to 15 years.”

Morrissey praised the Quincy Police and Fire Departments, State Fire Marshall’s office and State Police for their “outstanding work and cooperation,” in putting the case together, and the prosecution team of Lynn Beland, Varsha Kukafka and victim/witness advocate Maureen Russell for their work at trial. “Manslaughter cases in fatal fires are very difficult to put together and complex to win at trial,” Morrissey said.

In addition to being convicted of three counts of manslaughter each in the deaths of Oudah Frawi, his two-month old son Hassan and his year old son Ali, they were convicted on four indictments each for violating one of the new laws put in place in 2004 in reaction to the deadly Station Nightclub fire in Rhode Island. The Robertson Street prompted the first convictions under the new law, according to Fire Marshall Coan. They were each convicted of a single count of Wanton or Reckless Violation of the State Building or Fire Code, causing serious injury or death, for each of the three who perished and the fire’s sole survivor, Terri Knight, their wife and mother.

“Terri Knight went to bed one night and woke up three weeks later in a hospital bed to the news that her entire family was dead,” District Attorney Morrissey said. “She demonstrated strength and courage to fly back to Massachusetts from her new home in Oklahoma to testify at the trial.

“Those deaths cannot be the end of this story,” Morrissey said. In the coming months, Morrissey and Fire Marshall Coan will be working together to draft legislation to make prosecution for renting illegal apartments more effective – and possibly to provide the threat of jail time for flouting the law, where now it can only be punished with modest fines.

The Fire Marshall also said that his office has been developing new training for municipal code enforcement officials state-wide to help crack down on dangerous illegal apartments expected to roll out this spring. District Attorney Morrissey has offered to host a regional training for Norfolk County officials. “The good news for the City of Quincy is that some of the best practices we will be looking to share with others state-wide are based on the steps that have been put in place right here in Quincy, and city leaders deserve some credit for that.”