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For Immediate Release

Statement from City of Lackawanna Mayor Annette Iafallo Regarding Bedford Avenue House Explosion Investigation

Lackawanna, N.Y. (Monday, August 9, 2021). The Erie County Sheriff's Department has completed its investigation into the house explosion at 91 Bedford Avenue in the City of Lackawanna which occurred the morning of July 20, 2021. This tragic event claimed the life of 92-year-old Irene Sanok and caused significant damage to several neighboring residential properties.

The explosion at 91 Bedford Avenue was determined to be caused by a natural gas leak from within the basement of the home. However, what ignited the explosion is undetermined.

We continue to offer thoughts and prayers for the Sanok family during this very difficult time, as well as those families residing nearby who were displaced from their homes.

My sincere thanks to the Lackawanna Fire and Police Departments for their professional and compassionate handling of the Bedford Avenue scene and to the Erie County Sheriff's Department and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) for working with us to complete the investigation in a timely and thorough manner.

I also want to recognize the Lackawanna Department of Public Works for working into the night of July 20th to clean up Bedford Avenue and our Code Enforcement Officers for their ongoing efforts to assist the owners of residential properties damaged by the explosion, most notably the heavily-damaged 87 and 97 Bedford Avenue locations. Based on a structural engineer's review, an emergency demolition order has been issued for 87 Bedford Avenue, while structural evaluation of 97 Bedford Avenue remains ongoing.

In closing I would like to thank the media for their compassionate handling of this matter and patience during the investigation process.