



## OFFICE OF THE MERCER COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Man Charged in Hopewell Township Homicide**

**TRENTON** – Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri and Hopewell Township Police Chief Lance Maloney reported today that a man is in custody for the April 25, 2017 murder of Laura Perez.

Brian Sheppard (DOB 10-3-1963), of 470 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road, Hopewell Township, is charged with murder, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose and unlawful possession of a weapon.

On the evening of Tuesday, April 25, 2017, Hopewell Township police officers were dispatched to 470 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road on a report of a stolen vehicle. Officers spoke with the resident and owner of vehicle, who reported that he returned from work that day and discovered his vehicle missing. He also reported that his roommate, Brian Sheppard, was not at home and he could not contact him. Officers entered Sheppard's bedroom and observed the victim deceased. The victim was subsequently identified as 37-year-old Laura Perez of Trenton. She had suffered significant blunt force trauma to the head.

An investigation by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force determined that Sheppard brought the victim to the house prior to her death. He fled the scene in the black Chevrolet Silverado. Alerts were broadcast for Sheppard and the stolen vehicle.

On April 27, the stolen vehicle was located in Hamilton Township. Hamilton Township Police Department units observed it to be operated by Sheppard. Officers attempted to conduct a motor vehicle stop of the stolen vehicle and a pursuit ensued. Sheppard drove the vehicle through Hamilton Township into Lawrence Township and West Windsor. Due to the high speeds and the dangerous manner in which Sheppard was operating the vehicle, the pursuit was terminated.

Sheppard was arrested on April 28 and subsequently charged with Eluding and Theft by Receiving Stolen Property. He is currently being held at the Mercer County Correction Center.

The case remains under investigation by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force. Anyone with information is asked to contact Trenton Police Detective Scott Peterson of the task force at (609) 989-6406.

Despite having been charged, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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