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CONTACT:  
Kenneth P. Thompson  
350 Fifth Avenue – Suite 5720  
New York, N.Y. 10118  
212.239.9292  
kthompson@twglawyers.com

## **Family Demands Answers and Accountability for Explosion of Con Edison Steam Pipe**

**Mother of 21-Year Old Tow Truck Driver Gregory McCullough Who Remains In a Coma and Critical Condition After Being Severely Burned in The Steam Pipe Explosion Urges People to Come Forward for the Safety of All New Yorkers**

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### **Press Conference Today July 30, 2007 at 2:00 PM at Thompson Wigdor & Gilly LLP**

NEW YORK – (July 30, 2007) – Gregory McCullough remains in a coma and in critical condition after sustaining severe burns over eighty (80%) of his body caused by the steam pipe explosion at 41<sup>st</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue in Midtown Manhattan on July 18, 2007. Before the explosion, Gregory was full of life, served as a member of the NYPD Explorers Program and the Marine cadet corps, an intern at WNYE-TV's Teen Talk, and attended church on Sundays at Christian Cultural Center in Brooklyn with his family.

“My son is a beautiful and loving person who is now in the struggle of his life. As a mother, I ask you to pray for him. That he will not lose his life, and that he will recover. I also want to know why this happened to my only child,” said Gregory’s mother, Tanya McCullough-Stewart.

Witnesses report that Gregory’s tow truck was hurled nearly twenty-feet in the air before being engulfed by 400-degree steam and erupting debris. Since the explosion, Gregory has had a number of surgeries to save his life and remains unconscious and unable to speak in the burn unit at New York-Presbyterian Hospital Weill Cornell Medical Center. “We are there for the long term to see the family through this very difficult time. We care about what happens to Greg and his family. He is a dynamic young man, who is at the beginning of his life, and it could have been anyone of us. This is a tragedy, but we are praying for the strength of the family and Greg’s recovery,” said Pastor A.R. Bernard of Christian Cultural Center.

Ms. McCullough-Stewart and her husband Frank Stewart are represented by Kenneth P. Thompson of Thompson Wigdor & Gilly LLP and Derek Sells of The Cochran Firm in New York. “This should never have happened. City streets do not just explode for no reason” said Mr. Thompson, a former federal prosecutor who prosecuted the police officers in the Abner Louima case. “We must get to the bottom of this and hold accountable whoever is responsible for this terrible explosion to make sure that no other innocent people are hurt or killed by any exploding steam pipes in our city,” added Mr. Thompson.

“We demand answers on behalf of Greg, his family, and all New Yorkers. We won’t stand for a repeat of the steam pipe explosion in Gramercy Park in 1989 or the type of cover up that followed it,” Mr. Sells said. “We ask all New Yorkers who were at the scene of the explosion or saw Con Ed or city workers at that site before the explosion to contact us,” Mr. Sells added.

“My son was only doing his job working and waiting at the traffic light at the time of the explosion. I want a real investigation to be conducted into the explosion. If anyone has information about how this happened, please let us know. I want to make sure that your son or someone you love never has to suffer like my Greg or our family,” Ms. McCullough-Stewart said.

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Additional information will be provided at the press conference about Gregory’s background, his medical condition and the events surrounding the explosion. His parents and attorneys will also call for an independent investigation into the explosion.

**About Thompson Wigdor & Gilly:** Thompson Wigdor & Gilly LLP <http://twglaw.com> is a law firm specializing in high-profile, complex litigation and investigations as well as civil and criminal trials. They can be reached at 212.239.9292 or [info@twglaw.com](mailto:info@twglaw.com).

**About The Cochran Firm:** The Cochran Firm is one of the largest personal injury plaintiff law firms in the country and specializes in a wide-range of civil litigation from medical malpractice to wrongful death cases. It was founded by the late Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. They can be reached at 212.553-9000 or [www.cochranfirm.com](http://www.cochranfirm.com).