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COUNCILMEMBER OF THE FOURTEENTH DISTRICT
PRESS RELEASE

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**COUNCILMAN JOSE HUIZAR ANNOUNCES \$75,000 REWARD
IN DOWNTOWN RUG MERCHANT MURDER**

LOS ANGELES— Councilmember José Huizar, and LAPD officials, announced this morning a \$75,000 reward for information leading to the arrest, apprehension, and conviction of the man who shot Ebrahim Torbati on October 23, 2007, during a late-afternoon robbery in the Los Angeles Fashion District. Torbati's nephew from New York, Adam Mehrfar, stood beside the councilman.

"Perpetrators of these senseless crimes must be brought to justice quickly, and I hope the reward will be the incentive needed to solve the case," said Councilman Huizar, who represents the 14th Council District where Torbati had his business. "I only wish there was more I could do."

According to witnesses on the day of the murder, a Black man cased the store first by inquiring about a rug at the Rug City, Inc., located at 840 S. Santee Street. The so-called customer left, then returned a short time later. This time he pointed a gun at the owner, Ebrahim Torbati, and reached toward the cash drawer. When Torbati struggled to keep the money, the robber shot him. Torbati, 71, died a short time later at the hospital.

Detectives found blood and other evidence at the scene. Witnesses described the suspect as Black, under 5'5" tall, thin, and 20 to 25 years old. He was last seen wearing a gray shirt and gray baseball cap. Witnesses helped a sketch artist reconstruct the suspect's likeness. Both witnesses thought the sketch bore an uncanny resemblance to the young robber.

Witnesses saw the robber run north from the store, then east to 8th Street and Maple Street, where he got into a white Toyota Camry with two Black women.

Ebrahim Torbati was a Jewish, Iranian immigrant, who owned one of the several rug stores on Santee Street. His closet kin in the US live in New York City.

The last homicide to occur in the Fashion District was related to a love triangle between two men and a woman in 2002. There have been no shots-fired incidents in the Fashion District in over two years.

Anyone with information regarding this homicide investigation is encouraged to call Detective Doug Pierce at (213) 972-1254.

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