

Shocking Twist in Alec Baldwin 'Rust' Shooting Case as Special Prosecutor Abruptly Steps Down



Special prosecutor Andrea Reeb, who was handling the case against Alec Baldwin in the 2021 "Rust" movie set shooting death of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins, announced on Tuesday that she is stepping down from the case. This decision came a month after Baldwin's attorneys filed a motion to remove her from the case because she is also a representative in the state legislature, arguing that it violates the state constitution for a legislator to serve in another branch of government.

Baldwin entered a not-guilty plea to involuntary manslaughter on February 23, 2022, while two others have also been charged. Armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed will plead not guilty to involuntary manslaughter, and Assistant Director Dave Hall has pleaded not guilty to a misdemeanor weapons charge.

Reeb stated that she decided to step down to ensure that justice was served in the case without any questions regarding her dual role as a legislator and prosecutor clouding the issue. She said that "the best way I can ensure justice is served in this case is to step down so that the prosecution can focus on the evidence and the facts, which clearly show a complete disregard for basic safety protocols led to the death of Halyna Hutchins."

Mary Carmack-Altwies, New Mexico's First Judicial District Attorney, did not immediately announce who would replace Reeb and declined to comment further except to say that paperwork on Reeb's removal had been filed with the court.

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Baldwin's lawyer, Luke Nikas, referred through a spokesperson to his motion to disqualify Reeb under the New Mexico constitution's separation-of-powers provision. The prosecution initially charged Baldwin and Gutierrez-Reed with a firearm enhancement, which was later dropped, reducing their possible prison sentence from a minimum of five years to a maximum of 18 months.

Gutierrez-Reed has blamed the shooting on potential sabotage, Baldwin's lack of firearms training, and a failure by Halls and Baldwin to call her onto the set for extra firearm checks.

The shooting incident occurred on the "Rust" movie set in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on October 21, 2021. Baldwin was rehearsing a scene that involved him pointing a gun at the camera when the weapon discharged, killing Hutchins and injuring director Joel Souza.

The incident has led to widespread calls for changes in the film industry's safety protocols, especially about firearms on set. Baldwin has since called for the use of non-lethal weapons on film sets and the presence of independent safety officers to monitor firearm use.

The case has also highlighted the issue of responsibility on film sets and the need for increased safety measures. The film industry has been criticized for its lax approach to safety, with many calling for better regulations and accountability.

The decision by Reeb to step down from the case adds another layer of complexity to an already high-profile case. The following steps in the legal proceedings are unclear, but the case will continue to draw attention and scrutiny in the coming months.