

N.J. School Bus Company Sued In “Preventable Death” of Teenage Disabled Student *Landon Goff's parents aim to prevent future tragedies linked to school paratransit safety failures*

Atlantic City, NJ (December 5, 2023) – Jennifer Spahr and Aaron Kizer-Goff, parents of the late Landon Goff, continue to mourn one year after the death of their 16-year-old son, while now fighting for justice in his name and on behalf of all disabled students in New Jersey they contend are susceptible to preventable, potentially lethal injury on their daily school bus ride. The Galloway Township couple just filed a [catastrophic negligence lawsuit](#) (*A. Kizer-Goff, J. Spahr v. Sheppard Bus Services Inc., et al. N.J. Superior Court, Atlantic County, ATL-L-003140-23, 12/1/2023*) through the D’Amato Law Firm against [Sheppard Bus Services, Inc.](#), the private bus contractor allegedly responsible for Landon’s death last December by violating operational safety standards, including those regarding immediate reporting of on-board health emergencies.

The multi-count complaint details the horrific actions – and inaction - last December 1st on the Sheppard school bus that led to Landon’s “preventable and foreseeable” death on December 4th, following what should have been an uneventful morning bus ride from his family’s home to Cape May County Special Services School where he was a sophomore. The bus driver that day was a regular on the route, however, the bus aide, also responsible for the safety and well-being of Landon (*photos: “always-smiling Landon” and before removal from life support*) and the other three students on the vehicle, was a substitute.



Attorneys Alexa D’Amato Barrera and Stephen M. Van Natten, whose Egg Harbor Township, N.J. firm represents the parents, said following the filing, “Landon would be alive today if Sheppard and its employees had only followed long established state regulations enacted to ensure the safety of disabled New Jersey students riding school transportation. Our pre-suit investigation revealed numerous catastrophic failures – including on the part of the driver and fill-in aide - that Landon’s parents believe must be corrected as soon as possible before there are additional preventable tragedies. Jennifer and Aaron, loving parents who were blessed by their son’s incredibly positive attitude and infectious smile, seek justice knowing Landon would want them to do all they can to protect other disabled students from harm. He was their light and they’re unwilling to accept the darkness that has followed his loss.”

According to the complaint, at some point during the bus trip that fateful morning, Landon, who was wheelchair-dependent, became unconscious, but “at no time during the approximately 44-minute transport did the bus driver or bus aide make any radio communication or any other communication to anyone to alert them” of his grave condition. Neither employee on the bus rendered any form of aid to Landon; it was not until the bus arrived at the school – shortly after 9 a.m. - that a resource officer was alerted by a radio transmission on his school radio that there was a student on the school bus that was



unconscious and unresponsive. He was rushed to a local hospital, then airlifted to Dupont Children's Hospital, Delaware, where he died on December 4th. The cause of death was hypoxic brain injury and upper airway obstruction.

Jennifer and Aaron, after the filing, stated: "Landon was a truly special boy who loved life and was making great progress in every way, getting closer daily to walking on his own. He was a fighter and was fighting for a brighter future. We are beyond heartbroken; we cannot begin to understand how Landon – one of only four kids on the Sheppard bus that morning – could be the victim of such cruel neglect by the bus driver and aide that cost him his life. How could they not even bother to call 911? We still do not know why the required onboard bus security camera system wasn't working that morning, why there have been no charges brought following his death, or whether Sheppard has in any way has been held to account. So we're left with no choice but to get the answers; all parents of special children, like Landon, deserve to know their kids are not second-class citizens, and that everything possible is being done to protect them from danger, including on the school bus."

Note: Interview requests with the parents can be arranged through the contacts listed below. It is noted in the Complaint that other defendants may be named as discovery progresses. Additional family photos are available at <http://damatolawfirm.com//in-the-news/landon-goff-case/>

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