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NEWS RELEASE

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Herrmann Law Group Files Wrongful Death Claim Against City of Seattle

Victim Shot and Killed in CHOP

Seattle, WASH. (July 20, 2020) - Today the Herrmann Law Group filed a claim against the City of Seattle, King County, and Washington State for the wrongful death of 19-year-old Horace Lorenzo Anderson. The claim alleges Seattle officials created a dangerous environment and city personnel failed to protect or medically assist Anderson.

Under Washington State law, a claim must be filed before a lawsuit. Sixty days after filing the claim, Herrmann Law Group will file a lawsuit in federal court. The firm represents Anderson's mother Donnitta Sinclair.

In the early morning of June 20, 2020, Anderson was shot multiple times. The shooting occurred in the Capitol Hill Occupied Protest zone, also known as CHOP, located in Seattle's Capitol Hill district. According to media and witness reports, units of the Seattle Fire Department ("SFD") and Seattle Police Department ("SPD") stood by and declined to assist Anderson as he lay bleeding to death.

A video indicates SFD and SPD personnel knew Anderson was shot and in need of medical assistance. Circulating on social media, the video shows a man yelling at SFD medics sitting in an ambulance. "You guys could be saving this man's life right now.... You could be saving his life. You could be saving his life.... Sir, please explain, what's going on? He's dying. He needs your help."

The ambulance driver appears to use his two-way radio to confirm he does not have clearance to assist. SFD was apparently waiting for SPD support, which never arrived. Civilians eventually drove Anderson to Harborview Medical Center in a pick-up truck. He reportedly died at the hospital.

Anderson's mother, who works with at-risk youth, wants answers for her son's death. "Explain to me why they didn't go in there and help my son."

Anderson, who went by his middle name of Lorenzo, recently graduated from the Interagency Academy's Youth Education Program, an alternative high school in Seattle. Since his death, former teachers and others have praised his "positive spirit" and "contagious smile."

Sinclair's lawyers, Lara Herrmann and Mark Lindquist of the Herrmann Law Group, have issued a joint statement calling for justice and answers. "The actions and inaction of city officials have been outrageous in numerous ways. Lorenzo's family needs justice. The community needs the truth. Seattle government needs to be more transparent and accountable."

The SPD East Precinct, less than two blocks from where Anderson lay bleeding, was abandoned about ten days before the shooting. During an eight-day period, there were five shootings in the CHOP area with six victims.

"Something like this was foreseeable and the city should have been prepared," said Lindquist, the former elected Prosecutor for Pierce County. "City officials were focused on politics instead of public safety. There was no plan. Nobody was on the same page."

On June 11, Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best publicly denied giving the order. She blamed city leaders for bowing to "severe public pressure." Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan also denied giving the order. The politics surrounding the decision to abandon the area and the lack of medical assistance for Anderson are still unclear.

"We've been told fire department medics wanted to do their jobs and help Lorenzo," Herrmann said, "but there was a lack of preparation and coordination among city agencies. The medics apparently couldn't get clearance or support."

Police did not reclaim the East Precinct until after the final shooting incident on June 29, which left a 16-year-old dead and a 14-year-old wounded. Police took back the building and dismantled CHOP on July 1 with no serious injuries to either police or protestors.

Herrmann and Lindquist asked anyone who has information or evidence regarding the death of Lorenzo Anderson to contact the Herrmann Law Group.

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