

March 24 Fatality in Richmond Illustrates Ongoing Danger Of High-Speed Police Pursuits

Petersburg, VA Attorney Charles Cuthbert says police chases are causing too many accidents and fatalities.

Petersburg, Va. ([PRWEB](#)) March 29, 2010 -- A recent high-speed police pursuit that ended in the death of an innocent bystander is another example of an improper law enforcement practice causing unnecessary grief for Virginia families, said Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr., a Petersburg, Va. attorney who is assisting another family in a similar case.

"This happens entirely too often," Cuthbert said. "Barely a month goes by without a story like this, and the results are tragic, especially for family members whose lives are affected forever by the loss of a loved one."

Anthony L. Taylor, 44, was killed March 24 in Richmond when a car being pursued by police ran a stop sign and plowed into Taylor's vehicle, according to a [story](#) in the Richmond Times-Dispatch. The newspaper called the incident "part of a series of police pursuits that have ended or jeopardized the lives of participants and bystanders and caused severe damage."

Cuthbert represents the father of a young man killed in a high-speed police chase in a lawsuit against the Petersburg Bureau of Police and two of its officers (Gary A. Hargrave, Administrator of the Estate of Donte Keivon Howlett v. City of Petersburg, et. al., Case No. CL09-539). Donte Howlett, 22, was killed in a high-speed police chase in Petersburg in 2008.

The lawsuit alleges negligence on the part of the police officers involved in the chase, as well as on the part of the city, which failed to enforce its pursuit policy despite similar fatal wrecks that occurred prior to the one that killed Donte.

High speed pursuits have been implicated in other Virginia accidents. In October, a Richmond police pursuit of a 19-year-old Henrico resident caused multiple collisions. In December, two men died in a high-speed police chase as they fled police.

"Law enforcement officers, agencies and their governing organizations must be held accountable when they take this kind of dangerous risk with the public's safety," Cuthbert said.

But, Cuthbert cautions, families who are harmed must take action quickly. "Typically, as is demonstrated in news reports about cases like these, law enforcement agencies are reluctant to release information when their officers are involved in a wreck," he said. "I have obtained records through the Freedom of Information Act to show what happened, including police departments' protocols for high-speed pursuits, and copies of police radio traffic, including 911 calls. But, it is essential that family members secure help before files are overwritten and records are gone."



About Cuthbert Law Offices

For more than 30 years, [Cuthbert Law Offices](#) has successfully litigated cases for clients and their families throughout Virginia. The firm handles personal injury claims including [car and truck accidents](#), medical malpractice and [wrongful deaths](#). The firm also helps clients obtain disability benefits that the Social Security Administration has denied.

Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr., firm partner, focuses his practice on representing victims of serious injuries. He is a graduate of Harvard College. He earned a joint JD/MBA degree from the University of Virginia School of Law. He is a member of the bars in Virginia and North Carolina, as well as the U.S. Court of Appeals 4th Circuit and the U.S. Supreme Court.

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