

khou.com**TEXAS**

Another lawsuit filed in deadly Texas bus crash

08/19/2008

Associated Press

The estate of one of 17 people killed on a bus trip to a religious festival filed a lawsuit Monday against the driver, owner and manufacturer of the bus that blew a tire and skidded off the highway.

The lawsuit filed in Harris County seeks unspecified damages, and is at least the second lawsuit stemming from the Aug. 8 crash in Sherman that injured the 38 other people on board.

The suit was filed on behalf of Cham Nguyen, a parishioner who was killed when the bus operated by Angel Tours Inc. crashed on its way to Missouri. Federal investigators say the bus had blown a tire that had been illegally refitted with new tread.

Nguyen's grandson, Peter Pham, 46, of Port Lavaca, said his aunt Catherine Tran also died in the crash. His mother, Ngoc Tran, is still in the hospital, he said.

Pham said he rushed to Sherman immediately after learning of the accident and tried to find his relatives. Information was hard to come by, he said. Hospital officials could not verify information for privacy reasons and because many passengers did not carry identification, he said.

He found his grandmother's body in Fort Worth.

"It just overwhelms," he said. "There's no words to describe it."

Attorney Tammy Tran said she wants a law passed that would require all buses to have safety belts.

Relatives of a 2006 school bus crash recently met with U.S. Sen. John Cornyn and U.S. Rep. Ted Poe and urged both Texas congressmen to support a bill co-sponsored by U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, that would require motor coaches to have lap shoulder seatbelts and laminated glass.

"It's something for the nation to think about," Tran said. "We need the seatbelt law."

The passengers on the bus were members of a Vietnamese Catholic group.

Repeated attempts by The Associated Press to reach Angel de la Torre, owner of the bus company, have been unsuccessful.