



Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Man Sentenced to 15 to 20½ Years in Prison for Richmond Heights Fatal DUI Crash

CLEVELAND – Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael C. O'Malley announced that Patrick Johnson, 51, was sentenced to 15 to 20½ years in prison for driving under the influence with a suspended license, causing a fatal head-on collision in July 2020.

"This individual made the irresponsible choice to drive under the influence, severely injuring the mother which resulted in the death of her child," said Prosecutor O'Malley. "Hopefully, this sentence provides some semblance of peace to the victim and her family."

Around 1 p.m. on July 25, 2020, Patrick Johnson was in the center lane heading northbound in his Cadillac on Richmond Road. Johnson pulled to the left, crossed over the center double line, and collided head-on into the twenty-seven-year-old pregnant victim's Hyundai which was traveling in the opposite direction. The momentum from the collision caused both vehicles to crash over the curb into the tree lawn.

The Richmond Heights Police Department, Highland Heights Police Department, Richmond Heights Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Lyndhurst Fire Department and EMS responded to the scene. Once on scene, Johnson's car caught fire and police rescued him from the vehicle. Johnson repeatedly attempted to attack pedestrians that offered assistance, yelled at law enforcement, and had to be restrained until police and medics could place him in an ambulance. He was transported to a nearby hospital and treated for his injuries. The victim, who was 36 weeks pregnant at the time, was taken to a nearby hospital where she received life-saving care. After attempting life-saving care on the child, the baby was pronounced deceased.

An investigation conducted by the Suburban Police Anti-Crime Network Investigation Unit (SPAN) with assistance from the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office revealed that Johnson was driving with a suspended license and under the influence at the time of the crash. The data recovered from the Airbag Control Module showed Johnson was driving at 55 mph at the time of impact, 20 mph over the posted speed limit.

On August 9, 2021, Johnson pleaded guilty to the following charges:

- **One count of Aggravated Vehicular Homicide**
- **One count of Aggravated Vehicular Assault**
- **One count of Driving While Under the Influence**

Johnson was sentenced to 15 to 20½ years in prison. He was sentenced under "The Reagan Tokes Law," which implements an indefinite sentencing system for non-life felonies of the first and second degree in which the judge imposes both a minimum term (from the current sentencing range) and a maximum term (that includes an additional 50% of the minimum term imposed). The Ohio Department of Corrections will review the case and Johnson's behavior after he has served 15 years and will make a determination as to whether he should be released.