



AZRAEL GANN+FRANZ
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

JONATHAN A. AZRAEL
KEITH S. FRANZ
PAUL J. SCHWAB, III
JUDSON H. LIPOWITZ
SUSAN H. TERLEP
JOHN R. SOLTER, JR.

EDWARD AZRAEL (1907-2001)
H. DAVID GANN (1928-1983)

OF COUNSEL:
DANIEL J. DREGIER, JR., P.C.
LINDA C. CARTIER
MATTHEW H. AZRAEL*
*Also admitted in DC

Families of Those Killed on Ground Settle 9/11 Litigation Against Airlines and Security Companies

Families Praise Settlement for Forcing “Accountability and Responsibility.”

Contact: Scott Broom
Redzone News
443-562-0112
broom.scott@gmail.com

Levi Rabinowitz
Redzone News
443-280-1911
Levi@redzonenews.com

Washington D.C. (Oct. 3, 2007) Four families who lost loved ones working inside The Pentagon in the 9/11 attacks have settled their lawsuits against the airlines and airport security firms they claim failed to prevent the terrorist attacks. A fifth family, devastated by the World Trade Center attack, also settled.

The settlements mark the end to all litigation launched against airlines and security companies on behalf of individuals killed on the ground during the 9/11 attacks.

The families are represented by Azrael, Gann & Franz, LLP, a Baltimore-based aviation litigation law practice. The plaintiffs refused payments from the September 11th Victims' Compensation Fund established by Congress, saying the corporations that share blame must be held responsible and financially accountable, not American taxpayers.

The details of the settlement are confidential.

Keith S. Franz, the lead attorney representing plaintiff families, said years of depositions and document discovery uncovered vital information his clients sought when they rejected the Victims' Compensation Fund. “Our clients feel their tireless efforts have yielded tangible results that have changed the way airlines, airports, aircraft manufacturers and security contractors view their responsibility for protecting the public,” said Franz.

“More than anything, our clients wanted the airlines and security firms responsible for protecting the public to step up and share accountability for the tragedy of 9/11,” Franz said. “The evidence we saw in this case proved without question that airlines and security contractors were responsible for profound failures in security that could have prevented the attacks.”

Julia P. Shontere, the mother of 27 year old Angela Houtz, who died while working in the Office of Naval Intelligence at The Pentagon on 9/11, said she rejected payment from the Victims' Compensation Fund because it deflected responsibility away from airlines and security contractors with taxpayer money and did not force them to answer families' questions. “We had a right to know, and now we do,” Shontere said. She praised the settlement and thanked

101 EAST CHESAPEAKE AVENUE FLOOR FIVE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21286
410.821.6800 FAX: 410.821.1265
WWW.AGFLAW.COM EMAIL: CONTACT@AGFLAW.COM

attorneys Keith Franz and Judson Lipowitz for their commitment and dedication throughout the long years of her waiting and praying for the most responsible outcome for all involved.

"We learned a lot more about what happened that day and what conditions existed leading up to 9/11," said Shontere. "That was important to us, and it would not have been possible unless we had filed this suit. Accountability and responsibility are what we wanted – and that's what we got."

The settlement agreement will be submitted to U.S. District Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein of the Southern District of New York.

"Judge Hellerstein brought two sides together in the interest of healing the wounds of 9/11 and allowing the nation to move forward," said Judson H. Lipowitz of Azrael, Gann & Franz. "The Judge wisely told the families 'choose life' and we agree. With both hard answers and equitable compensation, our clients are now empowered to become agents of change through the charitable foundations they each have set up to carry out the dreams and aspirations of their loved ones."

The firm will continue to assist its clients in their foundation work.

The lawsuits primarily sought compensation from American Airlines, operator of Flight 77, which was steered into The Pentagon by terrorists after leaving Dulles Airport. Argenbright Security, United Airlines and the Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority, which were responsible for security screening procedures at Dulles, were among others named in the suit.

The plaintiffs represented by Azrael, Gann & Franz, LLP are the families of the following victims: Col. Ronald F. Golinski of Columbia, MD; Gerald P. Fisher, Ph.D. of Montgomery County, MD; Ernest M. Willcher, Esq. of Montgomery Co., MD; Angela M. Houtz of LaPlata, MD; and Sigrid Wiswe of N.Y., N.Y.

Of the original 94 claims filed in Federal Court, seventeen cases of passenger claims and claims of those injured during the attacks remain to be concluded.

About Azrael, Gann & Franz, LLP

Azrael, Gann & Franz, LLP devotes its practice to the areas of complex personal injury litigation and wrongful death law with a concentration in aviation crash litigation. The Baltimore based firm is a member of the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee for the September 11 Litigation and has assumed a lead role in the case. Azrael, Gann & Franz, LLP has successfully concluded litigation on behalf of victims of other airline crashes including the crash of Atlantic Southeast Airlines Flight 7529 in Carrollton, Georgia, the explosion of Delta Air Lines Flight 1288 in Pensacola, Florida and the crash of American Airlines Flight 587 in Queens, New York as well as numerous general aviation crashes.

Contact: Azrael, Gann & Franz
101 E. Chesapeake Ave. 5th floor
Baltimore, MD 21286
410-821-6800

Reporters note: For additional background information and a copy of the original complaint filed in U.S. District court go to the firm's website: www.agflaw.com