

\$29.6 Million Verdict to Passenger Injured in 2005 Metra Railroad Derailment

May 2009

Renea Poppel, a passenger seriously injured in the Chicago Metra railroad derailment on September 17, 2005, received a \$29,560,081.15 jury verdict after a two-week trial presided over by Cook County Circuit Court Judge Thomas H. Hogan. She was represented by Chicago personal injury lawyers Thomas A. Demetrio, Daniel M. Kotin and William T. Gibbs of the Corboy & Demetrio law firm.

Chicago Metra Train Crash

On September 17, 2005, a double-decker five car Rock Island Metra train was traveling from Joliet toward downtown Chicago with 185 passengers on board. At about 8:30 a.m., the train encountered a track crossover with a maximum allowable speed of 10 miles per hour (mph). The train entered the crossover at 69 mph, causing it to violently derail.

Personal Injury Lawsuit

Renea Poppel, 25 years old and a graduate of Lewis University, was traveling to Chicago on the Metra Rock Island Line from her home in Midlothian, Illinois, to her new job as an admissions counselor at Kaplan University. She was 13 weeks pregnant at the time. As a result of the railroad derailment, Renea suffered traumatic brain injury. She remained in a coma for several months. Renea's unborn child survived the wreck, and was born via emergency C-section on January 21, 2006.

Attorney Tom Demetrio

According to Tom Demetrio, "Renea is one of the most extraordinary individuals I've ever had the pleasure to represent. It is professionally satisfying that the jury responded to her in such a favorable manner."

Attorneys

- Thomas A. Demetrio
- William T. Gibbs
- Daniel M. Kotin

Related Practices

- Personal Injury & Wrongful Death
- Railroad Negligence & FELA

Attorney Dan Kotin

Dan Kotin stated, "This verdict exemplifies the fact that juries almost always do the right thing. This jury learned all about Renea before she was injured. They met seven of her treating doctors and heard about her future. By this jury verdict, Renea will be taken care of for the rest of her life."

Attorney Bill Gibbs

Bill Gibbs added: "Renea Poppel is a remarkable young woman whose life was forever changed by this derailment. The jury's verdict appropriately compensated her for all she has been through and all she will go through for the rest of her life."

Metra had offered \$16,000,000.00 to settle the lawsuit immediately before the start of the trial. The verdict represents the largest compensatory damage verdict ever against Metra.