



Ankin Law Office LLC

Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

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Indiana Stage Collapse Lawsuit Filed

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Last month, a sudden thunderstorm with 60-70 mph winds rolled into Indianapolis, causing a stage at the Indiana State Fairgrounds [to collapse onto concertgoers](#). It was a horrific accident, resulting in 7 deaths. Additionally, over 40 other people were injured, many of them seriously.

Despite the large numbers of people seriously injured and killed as a result of the stage collapse, the state of Indiana is limiting damages to \$5 million, to be split amongst the large number of people affected. This is because an Indiana law limits the state's liability to \$5 million per accident, regardless of the number of people injured or killed in the incident.

Many people have begun to question the fairness of the liability limit given the magnitude of the incident. In fact, State Rep. Ed DeLaney, D-Indianapolis intends to introduce legislation to increase the state's liability limits for this incident and allow victims of the stage collapse to be fairly compensated for their injuries, as explained in this [Courier-Journal article](#):

Delaney argued that the state has greater responsibility because it invited people to the Aug. 13 concert and didn't inspect the safety of the outdoor stage that strong winds blew onto the crowd. "Our role is so deep that we need to take care of our people," he said.

Meanwhile, a lawsuit has been filed on behalf of a woman who was injured and whose same-sex partner was killed in the stage collapse. The couple were joined in a civil union in Illinois earlier that summer, but because it's highly likely that the state of Indiana won't recognize their union, she may not be entitled to collect damages on behalf of her deceased spouse.

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The basis for the [personal injury lawsuit](#) was explained in this CNN [article](#):

(Her attorney) Allen claims that the lawsuit aims to compel Indiana to change its policies. That includes what he called its “puzzling” and “wrong” cap on how much the state can pay out “no matter how many people are harmed, now matter how many are injured”...

The lawyer alleged that the event’s organizers “cut every corner that they possibly could,” calling their actions before and during that night “reckless.” He claimed that the fact there was a limit on possible damages didn’t give enough incentive to take every safety precaution.

Hopefully, the legislation increasing the damage limits will pass. If not, let’s hope that the victims receive sufficient compensation to help them recover from this horrific accident. Their lives may never be the same, but at least appropriate compensation will allow them to obtain much-needed treatment so that they can move on with their lives, as best they can, in the wake of this tragedy.

Howard Ankin of Ankin Law Office LLC (www.ankinlaw.com) handles [workers' compensation](#) and [personal injury cases](#). Mr. Ankin can be reached at (312) 346-8780 and howard@ankinlaw.com.