



SPOKANE COUNTY **NEWS Release**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

State Attorney General's Office Supports County Prosecutor and Closes Case in RiverPark Square Garage Accident

SPOKANE COUNTY, April 3, 2009 – Spokane County Prosecutor Steve Tucker announced this morning that his office will not file criminal charges in the death of Jo Ellen Savage, who died when her vehicle fell from the fifth floor of the RiverPark Square parking garage on April 8, 2006. Tucker had asked the Washington State Attorney General's Office to review a Federal Grand Jury Investigation as to whether the owners or operators of the parking garage could be charged with a State crime related to the death of Ms. Savage – specifically the crime of manslaughter.

According to the letter issued by the A.G.'s Office, they, "...reviewed the information that was gathered during an investigation conducted by the United States Attorney for the Western District of Washington, as well as witness statements, and various engineering reports issued over the years related to the physical soundness and maintenance of the parking facility." As a result of their review, the Assistant Attorney General determined that, "In light of these conclusions it will be difficult to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that Jo Ellen Savage's death was caused by either the criminal recklessness or criminal negligence of the parking facility owners or operators."

The Attorney General's conclusion supports Spokane County Prosecutor Steve Tucker's and Chief Criminal Prosecutor Jack Driscoll's determinations that there was not enough evidence to file State criminal charges, based on the federal investigation into the accident. After the U.S. Attorney's Office concluded that Federal charges were not warranted as to any alleged fraud or as to the tragic death of Jo Ellen Savage, Tucker requested an additional review by the A.G.'s Office but retained jurisdiction to make the final charging decision.

For more information, contact Public Information and Communications Manager Martha Lou Wheatley-Billeter at either 477-7195 or 263-9385.

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