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Family of injured Fort Worth teen sues over crash that killed four

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The family of a teenager critically injured in a fatal car wreck near Burleson in June has sued the 16-year-old driver and his parents.

The parents of Sergio E. Molina are suing for damages up to \$20 million, according to the petition. Molina, who is in a coma, suffered traumatic brain injury and a fractured skull, the suit says.

“Tragically, my young client lies in a coma, four people were killed and 11 others were injured, all because a 16-year-old chose to get extremely drunk and drive,” said Bill Berenson, attorney for Molina’s parents, Maria Lemus and Sergio Molina of Fort Worth.

Investigators described the June 15 accident near Burleson as one of the most difficult accident scenes in recent Tarrant County history.

Ethan Couch, 16, of Burleson was driving a Ford pickup truck carrying seven other teenagers, when he swerved off the road and hit a stranded motorist and three good Samaritans who were helping her in the 1500 block of Burleson-Retta Road. All four — Breanna Mitchell, Brian Jennings, Hollie Boyles and her daughter, Shelby — were killed.

The pickup then plowed into a parked car, sending it into a Volkswagen Beetle driving in the opposite direction. Two children in the parked car and two people in the Beetle survived.

Couch’s pickup flipped then smashed into a tree. None of the teenagers were wearing seat belts. Molina, who was riding in the bed of Couch’s pickup, flew out and landed on his head.

Criminal charges against Couch are pending. A test showed that his blood-alcohol level was 0.24, three times the legal limit. Investigators said he was driving 70 mph on a dark, rural road with a speed limit of 40.

About an hour before the accident, some of the teenagers stole two cases of beer from a Wal-Mart, investigators said, but they likely were drinking long before that.

Berenson declined to comment on whether Sergio Molina had been drinking.

The lawsuit alleges that Couch acted with negligence, carelessness and recklessness, which caused Molina’s injury. It also says Couch’s parents, Fred and Tonya Couch, failed to properly supervise their son, who was cited for possessing and consuming alcohol as a minor four months earlier in Lake Worth.

Couch’s attorney did not return a phone call Saturday evening.

According to the lawsuit, Molina’s medical bills have exceeded \$600,000 and could climb to more than \$10 million if round-the-clock care is needed.

“It is not clear when, if ever, Sergio will be able to get out of a bed,” the suit says.

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