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Woman injured in bus crash files suit

PHILADELPHIA — A Mount Laurel woman injured when a double-decker bus crashed into a railroad bridge near Syracuse, N.Y., killing four, filed suit Friday over the accident.

Candice Burks, 26, suffered severe head, neck and back trauma in last month's crash and has permanent physical and cognitive injuries, according to the suit filed in Philadelphia.

She sued Megabus driver John Tomaszewski, of Yardville, Mercer County, and two companies that owned and operated the vehicle. The suit seeks more than $50,000. Shanin Specter, the lawyer who filed it, believes it to be the first suit filed over the crash.

Tomaszewski did not immediately return a message left at a number listed for him. He remains on indefinite leave, Coach USA President Dale Moser said Friday.

Burks was one of 28 passengers onboard the bus, which was traveling from Philadelphia to Toronto when it crashed at 2:30 a.m. on Sept. 11 in Salina, a Syracuse suburb. She was seated on the first level toward the front, Specter said.

According to police, Tomaszewski was using a personal GPS when his 13-foot-high double-decker struck a bridge with less than 11 feet of clearance. There are about 10 signs leading up to the bridge to warn trucks of the low bridge, some with flashing yellow lights, authorities have said.

Paramus-based Coach USA has not confirmed that a GPS was being used or played a role in the crash.

"We still have no further information about whether some personal GPS unit was being used or not. We've been unable to verify that," Moser said.

The crash killed a New Jersey teenager, a Philadelphia college student from Kansas, a Malaysian preacher and an information technology specialist from India.

Megabus operates about 100 double-decker buses on scheduled routes to 33 cities in the Northeast and Midwest and has carried close to 7 million passengers since its launch in 2006 with no previous fatal highway accidents, the company said.