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For Immediate Release

New Video Evidence Reveals Phoenix Teen Assaulted While Lawfully Recording Police Abuse

Phoenix, AZ –

Newly disclosed videos reveal that then 16-year-old Sergio Nino III did not make any aggressive movements toward Phoenix police officers during a January 23, 2024 encounter at his home. Instead, the videos show that Sergio instinctively turned only after an officer abruptly pulled the teenager's phone from his hands as he attempted to record the officers. As shown in the video, the officers encouraged Sergio's father to "beat" and "throw out" his teenage son.

Civil rights attorney Larry Wulkan of Zwillinger Wulkan PLC has filed a Notice of Claim seeking \$500,000 in damages against the City of Phoenix and three of its officers for assaulting Sergio, violating his constitutional rights, and ignoring multiple mandatory reports of child abuse.

As shown in the body-worn camera footage, the officers encouraged Sergio's father to abuse him instead of intervening as required by Arizona law. When Sergio exercised his First Amendment right to record the officers in his own home, one of the officers snatched the phone away. As Sergio naturally turned toward the officer, he was violently tackled to the ground, suffering a fractured wrist and a severe facial laceration that required stitches.

Sergio pleaded with the officers more than 25 times that the handcuffs were too tight, but the officers refused to adjust them until a hospital nurse intervened. Medical records confirmed that Sergio required surgery on his wrist and was left with permanent facial scarring.

"This case is not just about excessive force," said attorney Larry Wulkan. "It is about Phoenix Police officers silencing a teenager for exercising his First Amendment right to record them inside his own home. They told his father to abuse him and then brutalized Sergio. That is not law enforcement; it is unconstitutional abuse of power."

The Notice of Claim is the required precursor to a lawsuit. If the City does not resolve the claim, a lawsuit will be filed against the City of Phoenix and the involved officers.

For more information or to request an interview, please contact:

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