

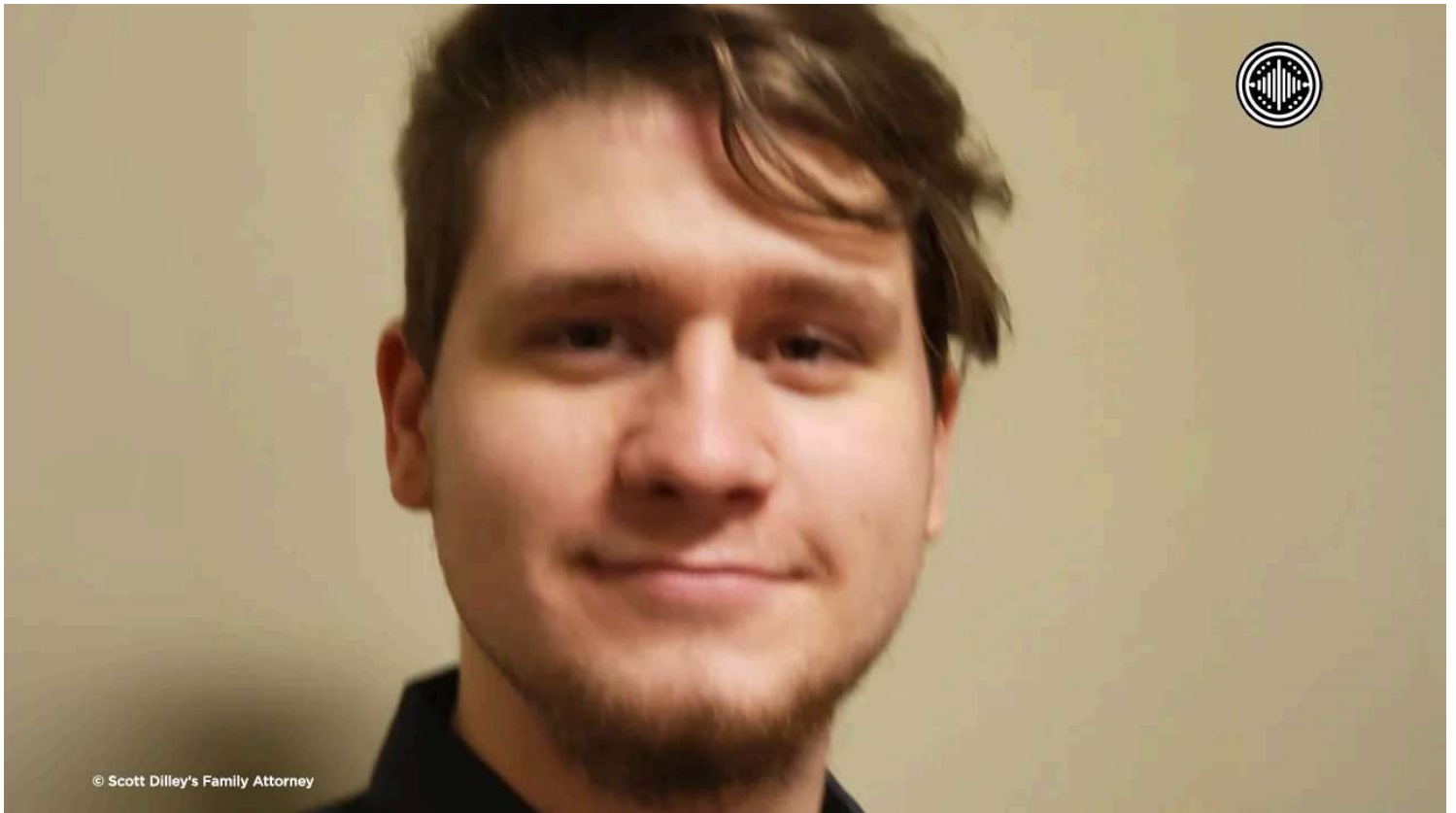
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Louisiana Reaches \$9 Million Settlement in Controversial State Trooper Shooting Case

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— Categories: Crime



Louisiana officials have agreed to pay \$9 million to Clifton “Scotty” Dilley, a man who was partially paralyzed after being shot in the back by a state trooper during a 2018 traffic stop in Baton Rouge. The settlement resolves a federal lawsuit filed by Dilley, who was only 19 when the incident left him confined to a wheelchair.

The shooting involved Trooper Kasha Domingue, who fired her weapon at Dilley and then falsely reported the incident as a Taser discharge. An internal investigation by the Louisiana State Police concluded that Domingue shot Dilley without reliable justification, failed to

activate her body-worn camera, and provided inconsistent statements that were contradicted by nearby surveillance footage.

Domingue's explanations for firing her weapon changed over time. Court records show she alternately claimed she mistook her firearm for a Taser, accidentally pulled the trigger, or said she feared for her life. However, surveillance video showed Dilley running away from the trooper, disproving her claim that he charged toward her.

Dilley, a passenger in the stopped vehicle, said he was never ordered to stop fleeing before he was shot. After being hit, he told Domingue he had lost feeling below his waist. She reportedly told him it was a temporary effect from a Taser, but in reality, a bullet had struck his spine.

"If that camera wasn't there, I don't know how this would've turned out," Dilley said in a deposition. He expressed hope that the case would bring about changes within the state police to prevent similar incidents.

The \$9 million settlement ranks among the largest paid in Louisiana for cases involving police violence. For comparison, Baton Rouge agreed in 2021 to a \$4.5 million payment to the family of Alton Sterling, whose fatal police shooting sparked protests.

More than two years after the shooting, Domingue was charged with aggravated second-degree battery and illegal use of a weapon. She pleaded guilty in 2022 to obstruction of justice, a misdemeanor that spared her jail time but barred her from future law enforcement work. Her conviction was later expunged.

The case raised serious questions about Domingue's suitability as a trooper. Records revealed multiple red flags during her training, including failed tests and physical and mental struggles. Despite concerns, the academy allowed her to graduate after requiring extra training.

The Justice Department's 2024 report on the Louisiana State Police cited this case as an example of excessive force and delayed accountability. It noted that Domingue stayed on active duty for over two years after the shooting because the agency delayed internal investigations while criminal inquiries were ongoing, which "adds significant delays to the accountability process."

Governor Jeff Landry criticized the Justice Department's findings, arguing they unfairly harmed the reputation of the state police. The federal investigation began in 2022 after the highly publicized in-custody death of Ronald Greene, who suffered severe mistreatment by officers.

In May, the Justice Department withdrew its findings, ending what it described as a "failed experiment" in federal oversight of local law enforcement agencies.

This settlement underscores ongoing concerns about police conduct in Louisiana and highlights the challenges of ensuring accountability and reform within law enforcement.