

# The Louisiana Jury Verdict Reporter

The Most Current and Complete Summary of Louisiana Jury Verdicts

April 2024

Statewide Jury Verdict Coverage

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## Civil Jury Verdicts

Timely coverage of civil jury verdicts in Louisiana including court, division, presiding judge, parties, case number, attorneys and results.

**Truck Negligence - A trucker lost a wheel on the interstate and it careened off the concrete barrier and struck the plaintiff's heavy-duty pick-up truck in a hard collision – this left the plaintiff with a C4-7 disc injury and a recommendation for a multi-level fusion surgery as well as painful headaches – a federal jury awarded the plaintiff \$575,000 in non-economic damages**

*Bridges v. Schwerman Trucking*, 6:21-2268

Plaintiff: J. Derek Aswell, *Broussard David & Moroux*, Lafayette

Defense: Jean E. Lavidalie, Jr., *Pierre & Lacoste*, New Orleans

Verdict: \$750,000 for plaintiff

Federal: **Lafayette**

Judge: Robert Summerhays

Date: 3-28-24

Stephen Bridges, then age 63, traveled on I-10 east near Breaux Bridge, LA on 9-1-20. He was driving a heavy-duty Ford F-550 pick-up truck. Bridges was passing a tractor-trailer driven by Luis Arroyo for Schwerman Trucking. They were an Old Republic Insurance insured.

As Bridges began his pass, two tires suddenly came off Arroyo's truck. One of those tires struck a concrete barrier separate east and west lanes. It then went under Bridges' truck and served as a ramp of sorts, sending it briefly airborne. Bridges was jarred in the process. The only vehicle damage was to the undercarriage of his F-550.

Bridges was able to regain control of his truck and realized that Arroyo

was driving away. Bridges followed Arroyo and alleged he forced him off the interstate at Breaux Bridge and into a nearby parking lot. Arroyo denied he had fled the scene and explained he continued driving because it was unsafe to stop at this location because of construction traffic. In any event Arroyo and Schwerman Trucking conceded fault.

Bridges, who no prior history of spinal complaints, was diagnosed with a multi-level herniation from C4-7 and a cord compression at C4-5. There was also an MRI which indicated thoracic and lumbar disc herniations.

Two months after the crash Dr. Mark McDonald, Orthopedics, recommended that Bridges undergo a three-level disc fusion from C4-7. Bridges received a second opinion from Dr. Neil Romero, Orthopedics, who agreed with McDonald's recommendation.

Bridges has also complained of a mild TBI which has manifested as headaches, memory loss, brain fog, fatigue and loss of concentration. The treating Dr. David Weir, Neurology, identified these symptoms, linked them to the crash and has recommended a variety of ongoing headache treatments.

In the fall of 2021 Bridges took a job as a traveling construction superintendent. It was a significant pay raise. While Bridges continues to have symptoms, it was his testimony that he wants to continue working and provide for his family until he retires at age 70. It is his plan at that