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# Lawyers: Va. Tech families settle

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## VIDEO

By Donna Leinwand, USA TODAY

Most families of the victims of the massacre at Virginia Tech agreed Thursday to a legal settlement proposed by the state, Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine said in a statement.

Surviving victims and families of the dead will receive a settlement valued at more than \$11 million total in cash, health benefits and other assistance, attorneys Peter Grenier and Douglas Fierberg said in a statement Thursday.

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The "seriously injured victims will be well compensated and have their health care needs taken care of forever," the attorneys said. The settlement will also release "previously undisclosed facts and information" about the events leading to the massacre, they said.

The families, their lawyers, Virginia Tech and state officials hammered out the deal over several months, the governor said.

"Details will remain confidential as the parties move forward to finalize and formalize their agreement," Kaine said in the statement.

The attorneys represent eight students who were injured and 13 families of the students and faculty members who died in the April 16, 2007, rampage. Of those, 19 students and families have agreed to the settlement, Fierberg said in an interview. Victims who agree to the deal waive their right to sue the state and the school.

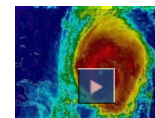
Seung Hui Cho, a Virginia Tech English major who four months

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earlier had been ordered by a judge to seek psychiatric care, killed two students in a campus dorm before classes on April 16, 2007. Two hours later, after mailing a manifesto to a television network, he went to a classroom building, chained the doors shut and began shooting students and faculty, killing 30 people and injuring at least 26 others.

The Virginia Tech Review Panel in its report to the governor in August identified multiple weaknesses in state and federal laws and in campus policies that, if addressed, might have prevented the massacre.

The panel concluded that that the Virginia Tech Police Department erred when it did not ask the university administration to issue a campuswide alert after two students were killed in a dorm room. University officials waited almost two hours to notify the campus.

It also noted a loophole in the state's mental health laws that did not clearly require the state to transmit records to a national gun-check database of anyone ordered into out-patient psychiatric care.

Cho, after exhibiting bizarre behavior on campus, was ordered by a judge to get out-patient psychiatric care, but his name was never entered into the database. Gov. Kaine issued an executive order closing the loophole. The Virginia General Assembly ratified it March 8 as part of a package of mental health legislation, and Kaine signed the package into law this week.

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**Bode** (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/12/2008 9:33:29 AM

Tasteless is accusing people of being greedy when the amount of money they recieved (100k) is barely enough to cover the victims college expenses and a funeral.

I am amazed at the bitterness expressed at people who lost family members all because they get a relatively small check. It's as if you feel these people have hit the litigation jackpot! I ask you, would you trade the life of your child for a mere \$100k? Would that set you up for life?

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**UGOTJOKES** (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 4:48:49 PM

What a joke. One more lawsuit that is tasteless and disgrace to the memories of those that died. Why hasn't anyone tried to sue God. He has decided everyones fate already and takes you when its your time!!! Let those die in peace and not have to see you fools getting greedy for money.

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**istherehope** (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 3:57:47 PM

This is how our responsible leader cover their butts! Then they just hike tuition to pay. I wonder if there is a confidentiality agreement involved. Sham(sic) on you!

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**istherehope** (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 3:55:03 PM

Free Money!

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[Bode](#) (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 3:25:03 PM

[aust42](#) wrote: 5m ago

I'm sure some scum bag Attny firms were contacting the parents of the victims a day after this tragedy happened. What a shame that our society allows this sort of thing to happen. Taxpayers are the ones that end up paying out these frivolous greedy lawsuits. The shame of it all is the Atty's are the ones that benefit the most financially. TORT REFORM!!!!

Labeling every lawsuit frivolous is just that...frivolous. Are you willing to sign a waiver saying you will never sue anyone for any thing? I bet not. No one ever thinks their own law suit is frivolous yet they are quick to label everyone else who sues as greedy.

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[Bode](#) (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 3:22:43 PM

[ok-now-what](#) wrote: 46m ago

[Bode](#) wrote: 4m ago

How about this. Tuition/room and board can be upwards of \$25,000 a year at VirginiaTech. \$100k paid to the families of each dead student will cover the cost of a degree that will never be used. Lets call it a rebate and stop attacking families who have suffered enough. No one is becoming a millionaire here.

The university is not responsible for this.

There was a settlement because in all likelihood the court would have agreed that the school's security department's slow response contributed to the deaths and injuries.

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[ok-now-what](#) (4 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 2:37:45 PM

[MyOpinion00](#) wrote: 2h 13m ago

If this would have happened at any College before VT on April 16th, 2007 how would it have been handled differently? It is always so easy to look back on it and say, "They should have done....".

As a current (and current at the time of last year's tragedy) Faculty/Staff member I honestly do not feel that the University did anything wrong. How do you stop 30,000 people from commuting to campus or going to class?

Also remember that this tragedy affects more than just the individuals that were injured, or the families that lost a loved one. Many people have seeked out counseling and probably will for a long time. Instead of some people fussing or arguing over if a "settlement was right or wrong", these same people should be focusing their energy and time on actually helping out to make a positive situation occur.

Maybe if they have all the answers they should run for office or be in charge of a department?

this is just opening the door to more lawsuits and more lawsuits and more lawsuits. There will be people who sue because they are "too scared" to get a degree now, etc.

This lawsuit, no matter how it ends, will never and can never bring anything positive.

Only the rich get the offices they run for. I run my small public school department.

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[ok-now-what](#) (4 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 2:34:43 PM



Bode wrote: 4m ago

How about this. Tuition/room and board can be upwards of \$25,000 a year at VirginiaTech. \$100k paid to the families of each dead student will cover the cost of a degree that will never be used. Lets call it a rebate and stop attacking families who have suffered enough. No one is becoming a millionaire here.

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Bode (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/11/2008 2:28:14 PM

How about this. Tuition/room and board can be upwards of \$25,000 a year at VirginiaTech. \$100k paid to the families of each dead student will cover the cost of a degree that will never be used. Lets call it a rebate and stop attacking families who have suffered enough. No one is becoming a millionaire here.

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