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From the Baltimore Sun

Trial in fatal crash will resume Feb. 1

By Tyrone Richardson
Sun reporter

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The driver of the tractor-trailer involved in a crash that killed two teenagers in January at a nonworking traffic light at Route 175 and Interstate 95 will return to Howard County District Court in February to continue fighting two traffic citations from the accident.

Gary L. Dicks, 24, of Stephen City, Va., received two traffic citations -- negligent driving and failure to stop at a through highway entrance and yield right of way -- that totaled \$360 in fines.

Judge Pamela J. Brown recessed yesterday's trial after more than an hour of testimony and said it would continue Feb. 1, allowing both lawyers a chance to present more information to support their position before she makes a ruling.

About 10:30 p.m. Jan. 6, Dicks was on an exit ramp off southbound Interstate 95 and drove his tractor-trailer through the westbound lane of traffic on Route 175.

The light at the intersection was not working because it had lost power. Dicks' vehicle smashed into the right side of a 1996 Volvo 850, killing passengers Scott E. Caplan, 19, of Columbia and Theresa E. Howard, 18, of Eldersburg, according to a statement of facts read by prosecutor Danielle M. Duclaux. The Volvo's driver, Meghan E. St. Martin, 18, of Marriottsville, was treated at an area hospital and released.

Dicks' attorney, Timothy L. Mitchell, argued that his client had the right of way at the intersection and asked for Brown to acquit his client. The motion was denied.

"There is talk about how tragic [the incident] was, but my client is not guilty under the traffic code," Mitchell said.

Duclaux said Dicks, who said in a statement that he saw the traffic light was not working, was at fault.

The Howard County state's attorney's office did not file any additional charges against Dicks. However, lawyers representing the Caplan and Howard families said they have filed civil lawsuits against him.

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