

## **Bus driver charged in crash death - Negligent homicide count filed against city employee who struck 2 women in crosswalk.**

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**DETROIT** -- A 61-year-old **bus driver** was **charged** Wednesday **with negligent homicide** a day after she hit two pedestrians, killing a **Detroit** woman and injuring her mother.

Tommie Jett of **Detroit** , a **driver with the Detroit** Department of Transportation, was arraigned in 36th District Court Wednesday, after running over 27-year-old Audrey Locke **with her bus** at the intersection of Grand River and Lahser on **Detroit** 's northwest side on Tuesday.

Her bond was set at \$5,000. The charge is a high misdemeanor. If convicted, she faces up to two years in prison and/or \$2,000 fine. Magistrate Sidney Barthwell Jr. entered a not-guilty plea on her behalf.

The **bus** also struck Locke's 58-year-old mother, Gwendolyn Locke, who was recovering in Sinai-Grace Hospital in temporary serious condition.

Jett was driving south on Lahser about 12:45 p.m. Tuesday, when she made a left turn onto Grand River and struck the two women, police said. The light was green, and both women were walking across Grand River within the crosswalk, investigators said.

Witnesses said Audrey Locke was dragged several yards underneath the **bus** . She was dead at the scene, police said.

Gwendolyn Locke suffered fractured ribs, a collapsed lung, and a large gash to her forehead, her attorney, Ven Johnson, said.

Locke plans to file a lawsuit against the City of **Detroit** for her injuries and her daughter's death, Johnson, said.

"How did this **bus driver** not see two women who were walking in the crosswalk **with** a green light in broad daylight?" said Johnson, a partner at the Southfield firm Fieger, Fieger, Kenney, Johnson & Giroux.

"There's no excuse for that."

Audrey Locke was wearing a bright red coat, Johnson said. A red coat was lying in the middle of Grand River while police investigated the incident.

Witnesses said Gwendolyn Locke stumbled around for a minute after being hit by the **bus** , desperately calling for her daughter.

Police said Jett does not have a bad driving record, but they were investigating to determine whether drugs or alcohol were involved.

DDOT spokeswoman Ravella Phillips said the incident is under investigation. She would not say how long Jett has driven a **bus** for the city.

Audrey Locke's friends described her as friendly and outgoing. They said she spent a lot of time at Lincoln Behavioral Services, which provides services to adults **with** mental illness, in Redford. Through the center, she often went on outings to movies, malls and restaurants, friends said.

"She loved going to the program (at Lincoln), said friend Mike Stanislawsky. "She was one of those people who always had a smile. She was always laughing, and she just enjoyed life."

Another longtime friend, Cathy Giuffre, said she had just talked to the Lockes on the telephone about an hour before the accident.

"Audrey was going to (Lincoln) later that day," Giuffre said. "I spoke **with** her, and then I talked to Gwendolyn for a minute.

"The only reason they were even walking was, Gwendolyn's car was in the shop getting fixed," Giuffre said.

"They told me they were going to walk to the grocery store, and then come to (Lincoln Behavioral Services)."

Caption: Gwendolyn Audrey

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