

Man Accused In Trooper Death Gets Plea Deal

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- The truck driver that was accused of running over and killing State Trooper Todd Larkins on Interstate 40 last year reached a plea deal in court Monday.

Mitchell Bowers pleaded guilty to vehicular homicide and to violating what is now known as the "move-over law."

Bowers was sentenced to three years in jail -- which were suspended for probation -- lost his driver's license for one year and will pay a \$50 fine and court costs.

"I never knew what it felt like to hate someone, Mr. Bowers, until you decided to cowardly plow over my husband. I will forgive you one day because I have to or I'll never see my husband again. My husband is in heaven and he already has (forgiven you)," said Larkins' wife Alicia to Bowers in court.

Larkins was killed last July while making a traffic stop when he was hit by the tractor-trailer truck driven by Bowers.

Bowers' attorney David Raybin maintained that it was Bowers' sleep apnea that led to the crash.

"What happened is a result of micro sleeps ...(Bowers) didn't remember what happened," Raybin said.

District Attorney General Dan Alsobrook said a plea agreement was reached because he didn't think the current laws would have led to a harsher punishment in a jury's hands.

"I don't think we gave anything up. This way it saves the family from going through a trial and it saves the state the money of a trial," he said.

Alicia Larkins said she wishes Bowers would spend more time in jail. "I'm happy with the state and all the work they did. I'm not happy with the law ... no I'm not happy this man is walking around," she said.

Since Trooper Larkins' death, Alicia Larkins has led the charge to strengthen the "move-over law."

Had Bowers been convicted under the new law, he would have most likely spent more time behind bars.

Bowers spent two months in jail awaiting the trial. His attorney said Bowers deeply regretted his behavior and that Trooper Larkins lost his life.