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## **CHARGES DISMISSED AGAINST HOUSTON METRO BUS DRIVER; DEFENSE COUNSEL RENEWS CALL FOR TRANSIT SAFETY REFORMS**

**All Charges Against Keaton Nguyen Dismissed; Attorney Highlights Ongoing Pattern of Transit Violence**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Houston, Texas — April 27, 2026

Dunham & Jones, Attorneys at Law, P.C., counsel for Keaton Nguyen, a former Houston Metro bus driver whose charge of Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon has been officially dismissed, issued the following statement through Mr. Nguyen's attorney Derrick C. Flemming regarding the case and broader concerns about safety within the city's public transit system.

The charge of Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon against Mr. Nguyen has been officially dismissed. Mr. Nguyen maintained his innocence throughout these proceedings, and the dismissal confirms what the defense has asserted from the outset: the full context of this incident did not support the charge. Nevertheless, this case occurred against the backdrop of documented and ongoing safety challenges affecting both Metro operators and passengers.

Public reporting and agency records reflect repeated instances of violence involving transit personnel and riders, raising concerns about whether frontline operators are being adequately protected in high-risk situations.

On November 8, 2024, a Metro bus operator was assaulted and stabbed multiple times by a rider before 8:00 a.m.

On January 7, 2026, approximately two and a half weeks after the incident involving Mr. Nguyen, 25-year-old Caitlin Stup was killed on a Metro bus after two passengers entered the bus and began shooting — fatally striking Ms. Stup and injuring a 16-year-old boy.

Attorney Derrick C. Flemming, counsel for Mr. Nguyen, issued the following statement regarding the dismissal:

“I would like to personally thank the Harris County District Attorney's Office for their diligent work on this case. Those of us who live and work in Harris County should be proud to have a conscientious prosecutor's office that seeks not merely to convict but truly strives to ensure justice for all members of our community.”

“Nevertheless, this case occurred against the backdrop of documented and ongoing safety

challenges affecting both Metro operators and passengers. Public transit operators are not security officers. They are public servants tasked with safely transporting passengers through one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country. Yet they routinely face volatile and dangerous situations with limited protective infrastructure.”

“Mr. Nguyen’s case cannot be evaluated in isolation from the broader reality facing public transit operators in Harris County. Bus drivers here in Houston are facing an alarming rise in assaults while simply trying to perform their jobs. Our client found himself in a rapidly escalating situation that began with aggression directed toward him. We were confident that a full review of the evidence would provide critical context that has yet to be publicly acknowledged.”

“This outcome underscores the importance of a full review of all the facts, not quick judgment.”

“Now that Mr. Nguyen has been fully vindicated, we urge Metro to confront the documented pattern of assaults affecting both drivers and riders. Terminating a driver without addressing the systemic safety challenges facing frontline transit workers—and before the legal process has run its course—raises serious policy concerns.”

These concerns include:

- The adequacy of driver safety training
- Availability of on-board security support
- Emergency response times
- Protective barriers and physical safeguards
- Clear and realistic protocols when a driver is confronted with aggression.

Major crimes (including assaults) on Metro properties have risen steadily in recent years. In 2023, the Metro Police Department reported 414 major crimes, followed by 473 in 2024 and 517 in 2025.

This case and these statistics highlight a critical policy issue: frontline transit workers are frequently the first point of contact in volatile situations, yet they may lack the institutional support necessary to prevent escalation. We urge Metro leadership and local policymakers to evaluate expanded security presence, enhanced driver protections, and rapid-response protocols to reduce the risk of future tragedies. Public transit safety is not a partisan issue. It is a public safety issue. Drivers and riders alike deserve protection.

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### **About Dunham & Jones, Attorneys at Law, P.C.**

Dunham & Jones, Attorneys at Law, P.C., is a Texas criminal defense firm that has represented clients facing serious criminal charges since 1989. The firm maintains offices in Amarillo, Austin, Bryan/College Station, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Denton, El Paso, Fort Worth, Georgetown, Houston, Killeen/Harker Heights, Lubbock, Midland, Plano, San Antonio, San Marcos, and Waco, and handles a full range of criminal matters, from misdemeanor offenses to complex felony cases.