

Family prepares to sue in airport death

by UPI

PHOENIX - Phoenix officials responded to a wrongful death claim with a letter blaming a dead woman's husband for allowing her to fly alone to a rehab facility. Carol Gotbaum, daughter-in-law of New York labor leader Victor Gotbaum, was found dead in a holding cell at Sky Harbor International Airport. She was arrested when she became violent after missing a connecting flight to Tucson. Lawyers for Gotbaum's husband, Noah, and their three children filed a notice of claim Wednesday, which was immediately rejected by the city, the Arizona Republic reported. The claim, the first step to a lawsuit, alleges that airport police used excessive force. In the past, city officials have called the death an accident. But Stephen Craig, a city lawyer, released a harsh letter. "So, with Carol reportedly screaming her hatred of 'American cops,' the Gotbaum family believes that these same hated officers should have put their arms around her shoulders ... and given her some attention," Craig wrote. "One would ordinarily expect that role to fall to a spouse. But Carol was alone." Noah Gotbaum's lawyer suggested the letter is a sign that officials are concerned.

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