FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 2, 2019

Herrmann Law sues Boeing on behalf of Pius Adesanmi’s wife

SEATTLE, WA – This week the Herrmann Law Group filed a federal lawsuit against The Boeing Company on behalf of the families of two victims who died in the crash of a Boeing 737 Max 8 operated by Ethiopian Airlines.

The complaint alleges three main charges: 1) Boeing’s 737 Max 8 was defective, 2) Boeing concealed the dangers of a new computer system on the aircraft from pilots, airlines, and the FAA, and 3) even after a Boeing 737 Max 8 crashed in Indonesia on October 29, 2018, Boeing failed to fully inform pilots of the dangers.

Ethiopian Airlines Flight ET 302 departed Addis Abba, Ethiopia, on March 10, 2019. On board were eight crew members and 149 passengers from more than 30 countries. They were bound for Nairobi, Kenya. Many of the passengers were traveling to United Nations or African Union conferences.

Herrmann Law Group represents the estate of Canadian Professor Adebola Pius Adesanmi, a world-renowned essayist, satirist, and human rights activist.

Born in Nigeria, Adesanmi was a Professor at Carleton University in Ottawa where he was director of the Institute of African Studies. He was a popular social media figure and award-winning author known for bridging the gap between academia and pop culture.

After his death, Adesanmi’s wife, Olumuyiwa Balogun-Adesanmi, issued a statement expressing gratitude to people around the world mourning the loss.

“I have no words to describe the depths of my pain on the untimely passing of my husband, Pius Adesanmi,” she wrote. “He was an extraordinary scholar, husband, devoted father and a fine gentleman. He was an uncommon breed. He wrote about human rights, gender equality and human dignity. He practiced what he preached. I am a living witness to the kindness of his soul and love for others.”

Adesanmi, dedicated to a better Africa and better world, was on the fatal flight so he could attend the African Union’s Economic, Social, and Cultural Council conference.

Shortly after takeoff, the Ethiopian Airlines plane had flight control issues much like Lion Air Flight JT 610, which crashed four months earlier and killed all 189 people on board. Both planes climbed, dove, climbed and dove in high-speed roller coaster rides.
until the final dive into the ground at roughly 500 mph. All 157 people on board ET 302 died.

In both crashes, the aircraft was a new Boeing 737 Max 8.

Driven by competition with Airbus, Boeing modified the 737 aircraft with larger, more powerful engines. The new engines created a structural defect that destabilized the aircraft with a dangerous upward pitch that could cause a stall.

Boeing attempted to fix this hardware problem with computer software called MCAS, the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System. MCAS was designed to force the nose of the plane down whenever data from a single angle of attack sensor indicated the plane was approaching a stall.

There was no warning to the pilots when MCAS was activated. Further, pilots could no longer use the control column to reclaim manual control of the aircraft.

To save costs and present the false appearance of continuity with previous 737 models, Boeing’s pilot training program for the significantly modified 737 Max 8 consisted of a woefully inadequate 56-minute iPad program.

The Herrmann Law Group’s complaint alleges Boeing “crossed the line between simple negligence and intentional misconduct when it concealed the dangers created by these defects in design, first from the FAA in the certification process, then in advertising to its airline customers, and worst of all, in failing to properly train and inform pilots.”

After the Lion Air crash, pilots reacted with outrage when they learned MCAS was installed without their knowledge. “It’s pretty asinine for them to put a system on an airplane and not tell the pilots who are operating the airplane, especially when it deals with flight controls,” Captain Mike Michaelis, chairman of the safety committee for the Allied Pilots Association, told The Wall Street Journal.

Following an FAA order, Boeing sent out a Flight Crew Operations Manual Bulletin after the Lion Air crash, but the information was inadequate. Among other shortcomings, the bulletin failed to advise pilots they lost the ability to reclaim manual control of the plane with the control column. The bulletin did not even expressly mention MCAS.

A preliminary report on the ET 302 crash from Ethiopian authorities indicated the pilots followed instructions provided by Boeing, including emergency procedures, but could not save the plane.

“Years of experience representing hundreds of victims has revealed a common thread through most air disaster cases,” said Charles Herrmann, the principle of Herrmann Law Group. “Generating profit in a fiercely competitive market too often involves cutting safety measures.”
The similarities of the Ethiopian and Indonesian disasters resulted in the worldwide grounding of the 737 Max. The aircraft are still grounded.

“Boeing needs to take full responsibility for these tragedies,” said Mark Lindquist, an attorney with the Herrmann Law Group and former Pierce County Prosecutor. “To move forward, Boeing needs to fairly compensate all of the victim families.”

The Herrmann Law Group, founded in 1950 by former State Senator and State Insurance Commissioner Karl Herrmann, is a personal injury firm with offices in Seattle and Tacoma. They are internationally renowned as a premier firm in aviation litigation and currently represent more than 30 victim families in the Lion Air crash.

Hermann Law Group’s practice areas include all types of personal injury cases from catastrophic disasters to auto accidents. For more information please visit the website, www.hlg.lawyer, or call Herrmann Law Group at 206.625.9104 or 253.627.8142.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Attorney Charles Herrmann    206.488.5911    Charles@hlg.lawyer
Attorney Lara Herrmann    253.380.5272    Lara@hlg.lawyer
Attorney Mark Lindquist    206.334.2672    Mark@hlg.lawyer
Paralegal John Herrmann    206.457.4208    John@hlg.lawyer

#####