

# **New Bedford Manslaughter Defendant Held Without Bail, Cab Driver Justified in Use of Deadly Force**

A 23-year-old New Bedford man connected to the August 10th attempted robbery of a taxi driver, which eventually led to the death of the defendant's co-robber, was ordered held without bail pending a dangerousness hearing during his arraignment this morning in Fall River Superior Court.

Kyle Dawson was indicted earlier this month on charges of involuntary manslaughter, armed assault with intent to rob, and two counts of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon. He pleaded not guilty to the charges today and will be subjected to a dangerousness hearing on November 8th to determine if he will be held without bail for 180 days while the case proceeds against him.

On Friday, August 10, 2018, members of the New Bedford Police Department responded at 1:12 a.m. to the area of 20 Bentley Street for shots fired. When they arrived at the scene they located a male identified as Christopher Dunton, 24 of New Bedford, on the roadway outside of a Yellow Cab, suffering from apparent gunshot wounds. Mr. Dunton, who was one of the passengers in the cab, was transported to St. Luke's Hospital where he was pronounced deceased. Police investigation revealed that the cab driver picked up Mr. Dunton and Mr. Dawson from an address on Cottage Street.

While in the cab, the two males attempted to violently rob the cab driver by placing him in a choke hold and utilizing a knife. The cab driver was able to escape the cab and fired three shots that struck Mr. Dunton. The cab driver had a valid

License to Carry.

During today's arraignment, Assistant District Attorney Carolyn Morrissette detailed the facts of the case and also revealed that after a thorough investigation, it has been determined the cab driver acted in self-defense and criminal charges against him are not warranted. The cab driver was the victim of an attempted robbery in 2005 and his friend, a fellow cab driver, was shot and killed during a robbery attempt in 2015. After the 2015 murder of his friend and colleague, the cab driver went and lawfully obtained a License to Carry a firearm for protection. Mr. The cab driver discharged his firearm within seconds of being violently assaulted in his own cab by two passengers – one who placed a knife to his side and another who put him in a chokehold while yelling "shank him, shank him." Under all the circumstances presented in this case, the District Attorney's Office finds the cab driver's use of deadly force to protect himself was warranted and lawful.

"After a thorough investigation, it is clear that the cab driver acted in lawful self-defense and the use of deadly force was justified under the circumstances. The victim was violently robbed by two men who threatened his life while choking him and putting a knife to his side. Fortunately he was able to extricate himself and get out of the cab," District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III said. "He still faced a potentially life threatening situation and fired three shots from a hand gun he was lawfully entitled to possess and carry. The victim had previously been robbed and his close friend, Donald DePina, had been brutally murdered while driving his own cab in 2015. The loss of any life is tragic but I hope the cab driver and Mr. Dunton's family can move forward with their lives."

The involuntary manslaughter charge lodged against Mr. Dawson in this case related to his alleged wanton and reckless conduct in attempting to rob the cab driver with a knife while

Mr. Dunton had the cab driver in a choke hold. This wanton and reckless conduct created a high degree of likelihood that substantial harm would result to another person. The defendant's intentional participation in this conduct caused the death of Christopher Dunton.