

Media Contact

Rebecca L. Gorley
rgorley@archcitydefenders.org
(855) 724-2489 x1025

For Immediate Release

**Missouri State Representative Bruce Franks Files Suit Against Police;
ArchCity Defenders to Represent Franks**

Two years ago police brutally beat Franks while handcuffed then brought charges against him for assaulting a police officer.

December 23, 2016 (St. Louis, Mo.) - ArchCity Defenders has filed a civil rights lawsuit in federal court on behalf of Bruce Franks, Jr., a resident of St. Louis, Missouri and State Representative Elect for the 78th District who won his seat after a revote following allegations of election fraud. The suit alleges that Franks was brutally beat, kicked, and pepper sprayed while acting as a Peacemaker at a protest in the City of Berkeley, Missouri two years ago. In the [complaint](#), ArchCity Defenders allege police officers from the City of Berkeley and Saint Louis County used excessive force, assaulted and battered Mr. Franks, all in violation of Mr. Franks' Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment rights. Mr. Franks has suffered permanent physical injuries and damage and asks for monetary relief.

"Mr. Franks' case sheds light on the dangers of police power," said Thomas Harvey, Executive Director and Co-Founder of ArchCity Defenders. "This suit challenges the tactics police use after a person has been restrained. A lawful arrest does not include kicking and beating a person in handcuffs."

On December 24, 2014, Mr. Franks attended a protest, following the police killing of an African American man, Antonio Martin, with the intention of de-escalating potential conflict. While working to defuse a situation, Mr. Franks was handcuffed, beat repeatedly with a baton, kicked, and pepper sprayed. Mr. Franks suffered severe pain and physical injuries on his face and head, a torn rotator cuff, a concussion, and contusions and bruises on his legs, as well as intense pain in his eyes as a result of the Defendants' malicious actions.

Officers charged Mr. Franks with Assault on a Law Enforcement Officer, and Resisting or Interfering with an Arrest, both of which had no legal or factual merit, and were eventually dropped. The issuance of false and fraudulent charges indicate a patterned attempt to cover up, conceal, and avoid liability for police misconduct. In the past two years, ArchCity Defenders has consistently stood up for protesters who have been charged by police as a means of covering up their use of unauthorized force.

In November 2016, ArchCity Defenders filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of Scott O'Rourke, who was unlawfully detained, threatened, and violently attacked by officers in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. The lawsuit charged the defendants with attempting to cover up the brutality by fabricating additional charges against Mr. O'Rourke, all of which were dismissed.

[ArchCity Defenders](#) has similar litigation against police officers and departments across the region that is still pending.

###