

Pregnant Chicago woman tasered by police

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11 June 2012

On June 5, a pregnant woman was hit with a Taser while she was parked in the lot of a Walgreen's Drug Store on the far south end of Michigan Ave in Chicago. Tiffany Rent is eight months pregnant and had both her nine-year-old son and three-year-old daughter sitting in the back seat of her SUV when she was stunned by a Chicago police officer during a dispute over parking.

Ms. Rent had parked in a handicapped spot to let her boyfriend, Joseph Hobbs, run into the Walgreens to purchase a new battery for his car keys.

When police wrote Ms. Rent a ticket for being parked in the handicapped spot, she allegedly ripped up the ticket, throwing it into the officer's face, and returned to the driver's side of her SUV. The officer stepped out of his car and was in the process of writing Ms. Rent a ticket for littering, for which he needed her identification. She reportedly refused to give him her identification, swearing at the officer.

In response, the officer reached through the window and tasered Ms. Rent in the chest. He then pulled her out of the car. Joseph Hobbs, Rent's boyfriend and father of her unborn child, tried to intervene to defend her and had an elbow dislocated.

Hobbs said, "I ran to the other side of the car, with my hands up, [saying] 'Stop, stop stop, she's pregnant, don't hurt her.'"

According to Rent, the officers dragged her onto the ground and taunted her while her young children watched.

Both Rent and Hobbs were arrested and charged with misdemeanor counts of assault and resisting arrest.

"How could you do that to a pregnant woman?" Shareeta Rent, Rent's sister, told the *Chicago Tribune*. She added, "My niece and nephew are in the back seat of the car crying. They did that in front of her kids."

Complaining of stomach pain, Tiffany Rent was taken to Roseland Community Hospital while in custody. After being released on Wednesday morning,

Rent's family took her to University of Illinois Hospital where the staff found the unborn child to be unharmed by the Taser.

Attorney John Muldoon, who will represent Tiffany Rent in court, is also representing another pregnant woman who was stun-gunned. Early last month, Charday Wilkins, three months pregnant when she was arrested by Chicago Police, was hit with a Taser and miscarried.

Police violence has been on the rise in the Chicago area. Last month, Democratic Mayor Rahm Emanuel was praised by President Obama for the repression of the NATO protests by the Chicago Police Department and Illinois State Police. The demonstrators, numbering up to 5,000, were outnumbered by police and subjected to police-state tactics, resulting in injuries and arrests. The National Lawyers Guild accused the police of "indiscriminate violence" in their treatment of demonstrators.



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