

Man Sues Airline Over Death of Dog

American Airlines is accused of negligence during dog's flight from New York to San Francisco.

Mark Edward Nero

A San Francisco man is suing American Airlines after his 2-year-old Bulldog died following a cross-country flight.

In a lawsuit filed Wednesday in San Francisco Superior Court, Terrence Ing claims airline employees refused to provide a veterinarian and other care after his dog became sick.

According to the complaint, Ing flew the dog, Willie, from New York to San Francisco on Aug. 2. When he went to a cargo room at San Francisco International Airport to retrieve the dog, he found employees surrounding the animal's shipping cage. Willie was still alive, but wasn't responding to calls.

When Ing asked employees to call a veterinarian, he was told one would arrive within minutes, but Ing alleges a veterinarian was never called.

He also says in his complaint that airline employees moved Willie to a cargo hanger that was off-limits to Ing, who wasn't allowed to see his dog until after a pet ambulance service was summoned, but by the time the medics arrived, Willie was already dead.

Ing, 29, said he filed suit to hold the airline accountable for its negligence and bring attention to a practice he said was common. He told the Associated Press that he hoped the lawsuit will change some of the procedures airlines follow when transporting dogs.

American Airlines declined to comment on the lawsuit, but a spokesman said that the airline safely transports more than 100,000 pets a year.

The Department of Transportation's Air Travel Consumer Report is published monthly, and provides a airline reports on the loss, injury, or death of animals during air transportation. The free publication is available at the Aviation Consumer Protection website.