

The mother of missing Peru State College student Tyler Thomas has sued the state of Nebraska for allowing a known criminal to live in the same dormitory as her daughter. On Monday, Dec. 3 in the U.S. District Court in Omaha, LaTanya Thomas of Omaha alleges that Joshua Keadle “abducted and killed” 19-year-old Tyler Thomas two years earlier on Dec. 3, 2010.

While Keadle has never been charged with Thomas’ disappearance or presumed death, he has told authorities he left the college freshman at a secluded Missouri River boat ramp east of Peru on the night she was last seen.

The wrongful death lawsuit names the State of Nebraska, Peru State College, the City of Auburn, Nemaha County and the University of Nebraska Board of Regents as defendants. It also lists Keadle as a defendant.

LaTanya Thomas seeks to recover \$1,640 in student debt and an unspecified amount of damages for being deprived of the care and companionship of her daughter.

Keadle, 31, is serving a 15- to 20-year prison sentence at the Lincoln Correctional Center for the 2008 rape of a 15-year-old girl while he was a student at Midland University in Fremont. He wasn’t charge with the rape, however, until he became a “person of interest” in the Thomas case.

LaTanya Thomas says a proper criminal background check on Keadle should have alerted Peru State officials about the potential dangers of admitting Keadle as a student and allowing him to live near young female students.

Peru State assigned Keadle, an older student, to the same floor and a few doors away from Tyler Thomas’ housing unit.

“The defendant knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known, that the plaintiff Tyler Thomas could be physically attacked by such persons,” the lawsuit states.

The suit alleges that Auburn and Nemaha County authorities were aware of Keadle’s criminal activities and criminal propensity before Thomas disappeared, but failed to take appropriate steps.

LaTanya Thomas is represented by Omaha Attorney Timothy Ashford.