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Letter: Huge lawsuits more harmful than useful

It was a great tragedy on Feb. 17, 2010, when Cornell University student Bradley Ginsburg chose to take his life by jumping off a bridge into the Fall Creek gorge. On Nov. 21, more than a year and a half after the incident, Bradley's father Howard Ginsburg has filed a lawsuit against Cornell for \$168 million. His lawsuit claims that the school was aware of the danger of the bridges over the gorges and did not take steps to secure them.

The loss of a child is a catastrophe and no amount of money will bring him back. The astronomically high amount in this case fogs that message, placing a price tag on that which is priceless.

Large-ticket lawsuits, especially those in the wake of a tragedy, are far too common in New York. Our laws and courts make it easy to file these suits and, in many cases, win astronomical settlements. These lawsuits put a high burden on our economy, our legal system and our municipalities, and we cannot let them affect our public places as well.

Howard Ginsburg suffered a terrible loss when his son chose to take his own life. It is unfortunate that even in times of devastation a big-dollar lawsuit seems to be the solution. It is time to bring back personal responsibility to our state and keep our public places open to the public.

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