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Local musician suing Lyft after claims a driver attacked him in New York

Posted: 11:10 PM, Sep 28, 2019 **Updated:** 11:28 PM, Sep 28, 2019**By:** [Sina Gebre-Ab](#)

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Cincinnati native and local musician Jonathan Pratt said his life and career were changed forever when he was attacked by his Lyft driver while in New York. Now he's suing the company, after learning it may have failed to vet his driver properly.

Pratt and a friend stood by a road in New York, waiting for the Lyft they'd called. It was taking too long, and Pratt decided to cancel the ride with driver Kouame Nguessan.

"He refused to cancel the ride, he was pretty adamant on the phone," said Pratt. "No, I'll be there in five minutes, just stay where you are."

When the car arrived, Pratt and his friend refused to get in, concerned about the driver's increasing insistence they not cancel the ride.

"He then started yelling at us from across the street, all kinds of stuff," said Pratt. "And then proceeded to pull a really violent u-turn through traffic, pulled up on the sidewalk. At this point, I started feeling like I'm in imminent danger."

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"I felt like I got hit by a truck," he said. "I was in pain everywhere."

He suffered a severe concussion, a broken wrist, a laceration on his back and a smashed elbow, which the musician said has effectively ruined his musical career.

"Memory, stamina, not having my right hand for a year and a half...just not playing for that amount of time is devastating," said Pratt. "Right now when I try to play, it's incredibly frustrating because I know what I should be doing and it's different. I'm never going to have the same capabilities that I had before."

Pratt's lawyers said Lyft is ultimately to blame for the attack. The lawsuit filed in the state of New York states that the ride-sharing company never did a background check on Nguessan -- which would have revealed that Nguessan did not have the required license to work as a Lyft driver.

A thorough check into Nguessan may also have revealed other red flags.

"We know that he had a number of violations against him from the taxi and limousine commission, including for harassing and abusing another rider," said Matthew Metzger, Pratt's attorney. "We also know that he drove about 700 times after the assault."

The lawsuit also claims Nguessan is just one of thousands of Lyft drivers operating without proper licenses.

"We feel that Lyft has desperately tried to position itself as a safe rideshare choice, but safety is taking a back seat to profit and revenue," said Metzger.

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banned from the Lyft community."

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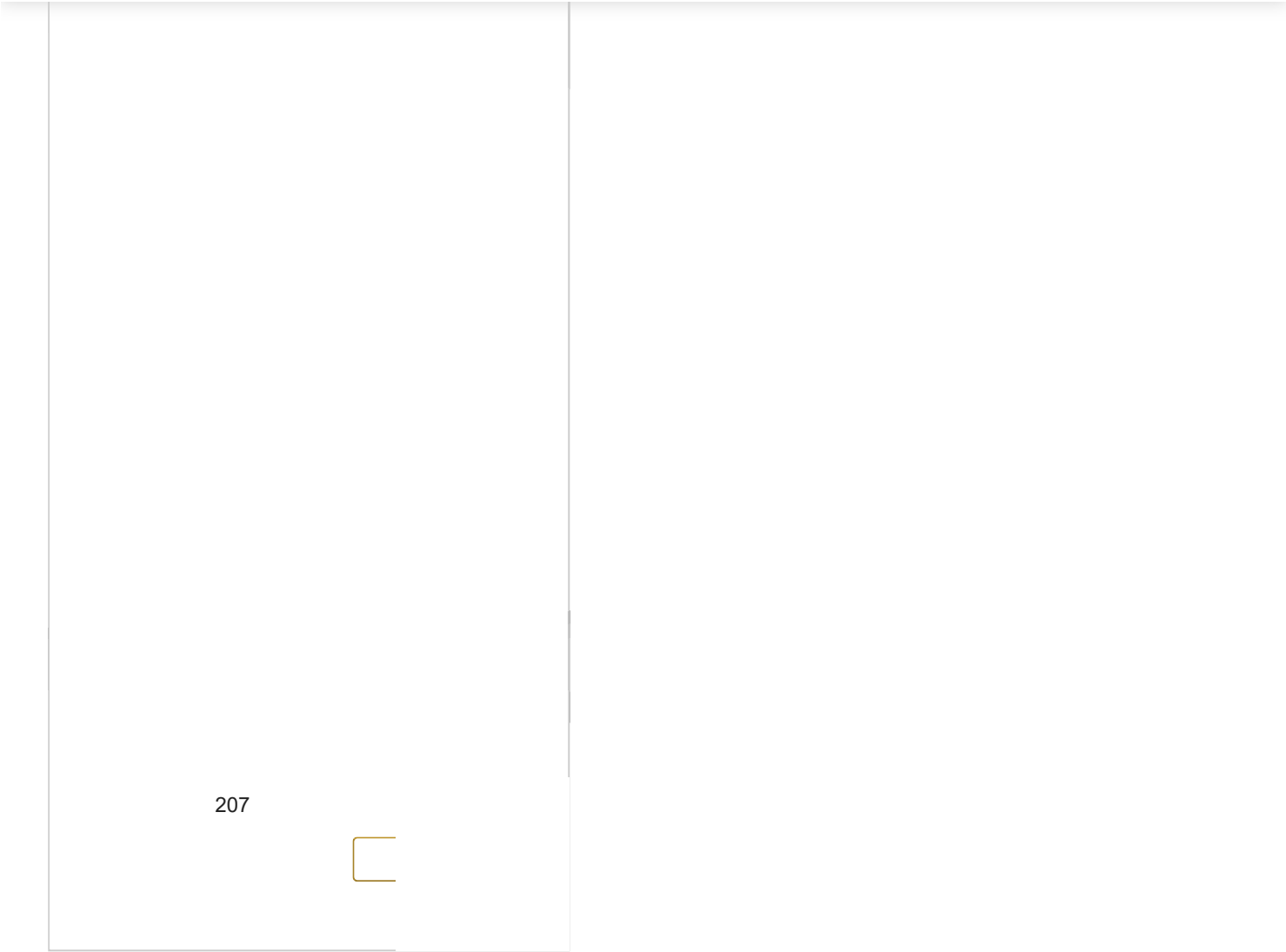
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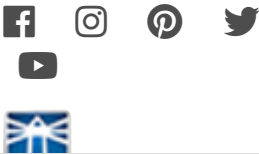
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