

# Douglas County judge charged with manslaughter

By AP

MINDEN – A Nevada judge has been charged with misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter in the August death of a bicyclist.

A criminal complaint filed Friday says Douglas County District Judge Michael Gibbons failed to exercise due care when passing bicyclist Joseph Longo, 61, of Gardnerville.



Michael  
Gibbons

Longo and Gibbons were westbound on Pinenut Road on Aug. 20, and Gibbons was making a right turn onto East Valley Road when the rear of his vehicle struck the bike, according to the Nevada Highway Patrol. Longo was not wearing a helmet.

The NHP's investigation concluded the collision was a result of simple negligence, and there were no aggravating circumstances or egregious conduct involved.

Gibbons attorney David Houston issued a statement questioning District Attorney Mark Jackson's handling of the case.

"We are surprised and disappointed that the local district attorney has decided to file charges," Houston said in the statement. "We thought the case should be handled by a prosecutor from outside of Douglas County. We believe that

this case is more properly resolved in a civil court because our accident reconstruction has shown that Judge Gibbons did not hit the bicyclist. This is a tragic incident for all.”

If convicted, Gibbons faces up to a \$1,000 fine, a one-year suspension of his driver’s license and six months in jail.

Gibbons, a former chief deputy district attorney, was first elected to the bench in 1994 and re-elected in 1996, 2002 and 2008.

He’s scheduled to make an initial appearance in East Fork Township Justice Court on Jan. 13.