

Court: Law may protect man who lost home

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SEATTLE (AP) — A man who accidentally surrendered ownership of his home shortly after his son was killed might be protected by Washington state law, the state [Supreme Court](#) ruled Thursday.

Attorney [David Leen](#) said the man, [Lawrence Jametsky](#), was in tears after hearing about the ruling because he hopes to get the home back.

Leen said Jametsky has been living out of a car and hasn't been able to find steady work.

"He's struggling," Leen said.

Jametsky was behind on his property taxes in 2008 when he lost his job and his son was murdered. Worried about the prospect of losing his home, Jametsky sought to borrow money against his home equity and pay off his tax debts.

Supreme Court documents say Jametsky has learning disabilities and didn't realize that the people offering to help him — a mortgage broker and an intermediary — had actually prepared documents in which he surrendered his home ownership to a third man.

The men first approached Jametsky to tell him about a deal to save the home four days after Jametsky's son was killed, according to a court summary, and the agreement was signed at a coffee shop soon after.

Justices ruled that Jametsky may qualify for protections under a distressed-property statute because he was behind on his taxes. The [Court of Appeals](#) had ruled that Jametsky's property was not distressed at the time because no certificate of delinquency had been issued by King County.

The case now goes back to a lower court. Leen said he's hopeful for a possible deal that would get Jametsky back into the house.