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Springfield, Ohio, sues neo-Nazi group that it says led Haitian intimidationAn Ohio city that was racked with chaos and threats last year related to an influx of Haitian immigrants filed a lawsuit on Thursday against a neo-Nazi group that it alleges was at the heart of the onslaught.The city of Springfield, Mayor Rob Rue and several others sued the Blood Tribe, leaders Christopher Pohlhaus and Drake Berentz and seven unnamed followers in U.S. District Court in Dayton.

They accuse the group of “engaging in, and inciting, a campaign of harassment and intimidation, motivated by ethnic and racial hatred, against those who supported Springfield’s Haitian community in the face of Defendants’ racist attacks.”

With legal help from the Anti-Defamation League, the plaintiffs are asking the court for a jury trial seeking to block the group from making further threats and to impose damages.Springfield, a city of roughly 60,000 west of Columbus, has seen its Haitian population grow to about 10,000 people in recent years, as Haitians have fled violence in their home country in search of stability and employment. Their growing numbers caused friction with local residents, as schools, roads, hospitals and social programs were taxed by the large population — and, particularly, after a child was killed in 2023 when a Haitian immigrant drivers hit School bus.

Members of the Blood Tribe heeded the call,” the complaint said. “Over the next few months, the Blood Tribe and its members and associates unleashed a torrent of hateful conduct, including acts of harassment, bomb threats, and death threats, against Springfield residents who spoke out in support of the Haitian community.”