



Automotive Litigation

Hagens Berman's automotive [litigation team](#) has been named a 2016 Practice Group of the Year by Law360, highlighting its "eye toward landmark matters and general excellence," in this area of law.

In litigating cases we strive to make an impact for a large volume of consumers, especially those who fall victim to the gross negligence and oversight of some of the nation's largest entities: automakers.

Hagens Berman has doubled-down on its core mission in regards to the auto industry, an area wrought with negligence and disregard for the millions of vehicle owners who trust the seatbelts, ignition switches, airbags and brakes in the cars they drive will not fail them.

Hagens Berman's Steve Berman was appointed co-lead counsel in the massive MDL alleging that [Toyota](#) vehicles contained a defect causing sudden, unintended acceleration and secured the largest automotive litigation settlement in history, at that time – a \$1.6 billion settlement – one that Judge Selna called, "extraordinary because every single dollar in the cash fund will go to claimants."

This victory spurred the firm to continue to achieve tremendous victories for classes of consumers, going above the mark to ensure that settlements are not only fair and adequate in making plaintiffs whole, but that they are used in the most efficient and advantageous ways to effect change in the auto industry.

Hagens Berman has also taken a stand against [General Motors](#), serving as co-lead counsel on behalf of consumers who suffered series of recalls following the installment of [faulty ignition switches](#), which led to more than 100 fatalities and countless injuries across the country. This pending action isn't the firm's first bout with GM. Hagens Berman also served as co-lead counsel on behalf of [General Motors ERISA](#) plan participants and their beneficiaries, resulting in a \$37.5 million settlement.

The firm has filed suit against [BMW](#) for concealing a defect in its i3 REx model electric cars that causes them to suddenly and without warning lose speed and power mid-drive, putting drivers and passengers at risk of crash and injury. This sudden loss of power leaves drivers unable to maintain a safe speed and is especially dangerous on highways, or when driving uphill. The firm is seeking to

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hold BMW accountable for this safety hazard that it was aware of but failed to correct.

In 2012, Hagens Berman began litigation against automakers [Hyundai and Kia](#) for overstating the fuel efficiency for many of the vehicles sold to U.S. consumers. In August of 2014, Hagens Berman attorneys secured a \$255 million settlement for owners of affected vehicles.

The firm also recently unearthed suits affecting two makes and models of high-end, track-ready hotrod cars. After investigating vehicle owner complaints, Hagens Berman filed separate lawsuits against GM and Ford for the Shelby GT350 Mustang and the Corvette Z06. Both models were sold to consumers as high-speed trackable cars that were meant to be driven at high speeds, for long periods of time. Unbeknownst to purchasers, the [Corvette Z06](#) and the [Shelby GT350](#) contain defects that cause them to overheat and enter a performance-limiting Limp Mode to protect the engine from damage. Owners report Limp Mode engaging even when the cars are not being tracked.

The impact of these cases, however, goes even beyond the amounts awarded to consumers. Hagens Berman strives to impact the industry's practices as well. Whenever possible the firm seeks to craft settlements that entail long-lasting benefits to the public as a whole and also serve as punishment to help deter future fraud in the auto industry. Our notable automotive settlements include a \$30 million to fund automotive safety research and driver education.

EMISSIONS-CHEATING LAWSUITS

The firm was also named to a leadership position in the class-action lawsuit brought against [Volkswagen](#) on behalf of tens of thousands of owners and lessors of Volkswagen, Audi and Porsche diesel vehicles containing VW's illegal "defeat device," which culminated in the largest ever settlement against an automaker – \$14.7 billion. Hagens Berman is proud to have been the first firm to file a lawsuit against VW regarding the Dieselgate scandal. The firm also solidified a monumental \$1.2 billion settlement on behalf of owners of [Volkswagen dealerships](#) who had been blindsided by the automaker's fraud and concealed emissions-cheating.

Fast on the heels of this litigation, the firm began spearheading research into the diesel industry, finding that Volkswagen was not the only perpetrator of diesel emissions-cheating. Hagens Berman is uniquely dedicated to this cause, and is the only firm that has purchased an emission testing machine to determine if other diesel car manufacturers install similar cheating devices, bringing new cases based on the firm's own research, time and testing. Hagens Berman's managing partner, Steve Berman, has bolstered the firm's unmatched dedication to upholding the rights of consumers and the environment, becoming a one-man EPA. The firm has single-handedly uncovered new defeat devices, and has filed similar suits against [Mercedes](#), [BMW](#), [Ford](#), and multiple cases against [GM](#) and [Fiat Chrysler](#). [View the firm's emissions cases »](#)

[Read more about the firm's emissions-cheating practice area »](#)