

## News & Insights

### Dykema Secures Product Liability Win for Client Key Safety Systems, Inc.

September 15, 2014

A jury in West Palm Beach, Florida returned a defense verdict in favor of Ford Motor Company and Key Safety Systems, Inc., on September 11, 2014, in an automotive product liability matter entitled *Sally Small, as guardian of Keanna Small vs. Ford Motors Company and Key Safety Systems, Inc.*, 9:12-cv-80841-KAM, USDC, MD, FL.

Plaintiff Sally Small, as guardian of her daughter Keanna Small, sued Key Safety Systems, Inc., and Ford Motor Company, alleging that Keanna Small was ejected from the front passenger seat of a 2002 Explorer during a rollover accident because of a defect in a seat belt supplied by Key Safety Systems, Inc. Plaintiff alleged that Ms. Small, who was 22 years old at the time of the accident, was properly wearing her seat belt, but that a defect in her seat belt buckle caused it to become “false latched” and to release during the crash. Ms. Small was ejected from the Explorer and sustained a traumatic brain injury.

Plaintiff’s counsel asked the jury to return a verdict in excess of \$100 million, as compensation for \$2.2 million in past medical expenses, \$26 million for future medical and life care, and pain and suffering related to Keanna Small’s incapacitating injury. After a three week trial in United States District Court in West Palm Beach, the jury returned a defense verdict in favor of Ford Motor Company and Key Safety Systems, Inc.

“We are pleased that the jury was able to set aside their sympathy for Ms. Small’s unfortunate injuries and consider the technical evidence that rebutted Plaintiff’s defect claims,” said Michael P. Cooney, Director of Dykema’s Litigation Department.

Key Safety Systems, Inc. was represented by Cooney and Brian T. Smith of Dykema, and Greg Cesarano and Derek Harris of Carlton Fields Jordan Burt, P.A. Ford Motor Company was represented by John Seipp, Jr., Sergio V. Medina and Dustin Lane of Seipp, Flick & Hosley LLP. Plaintiff’s trial team was led by Willie Gary, Lorenzo Williams, and Sekou Gary of The Law Firm of Gary, Williams, Lewis, and Watson, P.L.

#### Attorneys

Michael P. Cooney

Brian T. Smith

#### Practice Areas

Litigation

Product Liability

#### Industries

Automotive Product Liability Litigation

Automotive, OEM & Supplier Litigation