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News Release

GM SETTLEMENT SHOULD INCLUDE PUNITIVE DAMAGES TO INSURE FUTURE SAFETY

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Beasley Allen Founding Shareholder Jere L. Beasley says any settlement negotiations with General Motors (GM) must include punitive damages to punish the automaker for history of inaction

MONTGOMERY, ALA. (June 11, 2014) – Last week General Motors (GM) CEO Mary Barra shared the findings of an internal investigation into the company’s handling of an ignition switch defect that it admits is linked to at least 13 deaths and 31 crashes. While she said the report did not indicate any corporate cover-up, she admitted to a history of incompetence and inaction at the company spanning close to 11 years. She said the company will establish a compensation fund for victims harmed by ignition switch crashes, and their families. However, Beasley Allen Founding Shareholder Jere L. Beasley says it is critical to make sure GM is held to the fire for its wrongful conduct and failure to report a known defect that caused hundreds of deaths and serious injuries.

“Any settlement with GM must factor in the element of punitive damages. Not only should the families of victims be compensated, but a company that covered up for over a decade a known and most serious safety problem that killed a tremendous number of innocent people must be punished severely,” Beasley says. “The more we learn about what GM knew – who all knew about the defect and cover-up – and who actually made the decisions that were made, putting profits over safety, the more certain it is that GM must be punished. Our goal is to make sure that all of our clients are treated fairly and that GM is punished.”

GM recalled about 780,000 2005-07 Chevrolet Cobalt and Pontiac G5 vehicles on Feb. 13. Twelve days later, it expanded the recall to include an additional 590,000 model-year 2003-07 Saturn Ion, Chevy HHR, Pontiac Solstice, and Saturn Sky vehicles. The total number of recalled vehicles now numbers about 2.6 million related to an ignition switch defect that allows the key to unintentionally slip from the “run” to “off” or “accessory” position while the vehicle is being operated. The ignition defect causes the sudden loss of engine power, braking and steering, creating a hazardous emergency situation. The air bag system is also disabled and rendered useless.

Court documents and other evidence reveal that GM knew about the ignition switch problem as early as 2001. However, GM rejected several design changes and solutions that were recommended by its own engineers on numerous occasions because of the cost and the time it would take to make the changes. Its collective willingness to ignore problems is one of the reasons why GM failed to adhere to federal regulations and recall its ignition switches despite years of incident complaints, crash reports, failed

engineering tests, and repeated warnings from a GM lawyer that the company “could be accused of egregious conduct” in lawsuits involving failed airbags in Chevy Cobalts and other small cars.

Beasley Allen and The Cooper Firm have filed lawsuits related to the ignition switch defect. Lance Cooper, founder of The Cooper Firm, is the lawyer who first discovered GM’s ignition switch defect and uncovered the automaker’s cover-up, which finally led to massive recalls.

About Beasley Allen Law Firm

Headquartered in Montgomery, Alabama, Beasley Allen is comprised of more than 70 attorneys and 200 support staff. Beasley Allen is a national leader in civil litigation, with verdicts and settlements in excess of \$22 billion. For more information about our firm, please visit our website at www.beasleyallen.com.

About The Cooper Firm

Lance Cooper founded The Cooper Firm in 2006. With experience in substantial personal injury and wrongful death cases, he has represented plaintiffs in numerous civil jury trials and has successfully prosecuted hundreds of cases and gained multi-million dollar verdicts and settlements on behalf of his clients. For more information, visit www.thecooperfirm.com.

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