

Featured Case:

Defective Tire Leads to Severe Injuries

Our client was riding as a passenger in a vehicle that was involved in a single-car accident in August 2011. As the vehicle was driving on a major highway, one of its tires failed and separated, and the driver lost control. The vehicle then veered off the road, struck a concrete median barrier, continued in the emergency lane, and skidded down the road on its top. As a result of the accident, our client sustained permanent and severe injuries.

Our client sued the tire manufacturer for designing and manufacturing a defective tire. The negligence of the tire manufacturer was a direct cause of our client's severe and life-changing injuries and damages. We were able to settle the case on behalf of our client for a confidential amount. ■

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FAQs about the Motor Vehicle Safety Whistleblower Act : (Senate Bill 340, the Thune-Nelson Act)



What is this Act? Senate Bill 340, known as Senate Bill 2014-0019 by Senators Thune, Nelson, Fisher, McCaskill, and Blunt, is the bill's formal name as the Motor Vehicle Safety Whistleblowers Act.

What is its core function? The fundamental purpose of the Act is to improve motor vehicle safety by encouraging those with the best information to come forward and share it.

What prompted it? 2014 was a banner year for vehicle recalls. GM led the way, recalling about 20 million cars. Those recalls grew out of our case, the Brodie/Motors case, which itself was the result of GM misapplying, ignoring, and hiding proof of defect and internal warnings about the defect in the GM ignition switches for over a decade. Had the Act been in place in 2008, and someone reported the defect and the recall delay, Brodie and many others might still be alive, and thousands might not be injured. If a whistleblower who fits the Act would have contacted GM from itself and to our internal deficiencies and faults.

Is it federal law yet? Not yet, but on April 26, 2014, the Senate unanimously approved the bipartisan Act. The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation modified the legislation to include greater protection of whistleblower identities, amended the deadline for the Secretary to promulgate regulations consistent with the statute from twelve to eighteen months, and allowed the Secretary to make an appeal to a arbitrator if there were before the promulgation of any regulations.

What would make someone blow the whistle on their employer? Of course, we have seen it around for decades. They include those people with the best inside knowledge of hazards, defects, errors, and faults to come forward and reveal them. These actions protect American consumers and the country. And, there is a strong incentive: the whistleblower will receive a large reward for reporting the defect or safety issue.

How large might such a reward be?

Rewards are paid from imposed fines that
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