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In Fight Over Toyota Suits, Plaintiffs' Lawyers Pull Out All the Stops



The jockeying for taking the lead in the Toyota litigation has been going on for weeks now, but is documented in full force in the plaintiffs lawyers' applications to take the lead in the case. We document some of the peculiar positioning in a WSJ story today.

The qualifications lawyers cite — from Daniel Becnel's solo kidney (Becnel (pictured) gave the other to his brother) to Anita Jaskot's Polish tongue — are listed in applications that in some cases go on and on, for 114 pages in one instance.

The first hearing is scheduled for May 13, and lawyers are on edge about whom U.S. District Judge James Selna will pick to run the plaintiffs' case. For the Japanese auto maker, which declined to comment for this story, billions of dollars in legal liability could be at stake as it fights suits tied to its recalls of vehicles because of sudden-acceleration issues.

The lawyers' quest is a pot of as much as \$500 million in fees. Only a few will share it.

More than 100 lawyers have filed more than 75 federal civil suits. Most of them aim to hold Toyota responsible for a drop in the resale value of its vehicles.

The application of Florida attorney Lewis S. "Mike" Eidson Jr. mentions that he once was given the key to the City of Miami Beach. "I almost left that out," Eidson said, adding that he decided to delete the bit about his wife being a pediatric endocrinologist. "But I thought it does show I'm committed to the community and can work with big organizations."

A slate of attorneys has been presented to the judge by the three interim counsel that position California attorney, and Ford Pinto lawsuit guru, Mark Robinson, and San Francisco attorney Elizabeth Cabraser, at the helm. Others taking a leadership role on some of the committees are **Richard Arsenaault**, Marc Seltzer and Mark Lanier to name a few. You can see a list of them here.

Eidson's name found its way to one of the committees on the slate presented to Judge Selna. We'll find out in coming weeks if Selna approves.