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Brian D. Chase

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Bisnar Chase Personal Injury Attorneys, LLP



Chase was just a young schoolboy when he saw a Ford Pinto in flames on the freeway. The sight fascinated him, and years later, when he considered becoming a lawyer, he remembered it — and the litigation over Pintos' exploding gas tanks.

"I went to law school specifically to be a personal injury attorney," he said, "and in particular a products liability lawyer."

In particular, he is a products liability lawyer who specializes in auto defect cases. And among his many cases is a brand-new one against Ford Motor

Co. over an exploding gas tank, this time in a Mustang. A 27-year-old man burned to death inside his 2004 Mustang after it was rear-ended by a drunk driver. *Aversa v. Ford Motor Co.*, 21STCV17487 (L.A. Super. Ct., filed May 10, 2021).

"Ford has known since the Pinto litigation 40 years ago that you shouldn't put gas tanks behind the rear axle in the crush zone of a rear-end crash," Chase said. He has learned, however, that is just where the tanks were placed from 1965, when the Mustang was introduced, until 2004, when a federal standard changed.

"A lot of them were blowing up; a lot of people were getting injured and killed."

Chase also has sued Ford repeatedly on behalf of police officers alleging the automaker's Police Interceptor, a modified Explorer, draws excessive amounts of carbon monoxide into the cabin, which over time can poison the people inside. He has cases in Texas, Louisiana, Florida and California.

One is set for trial in October in Orange County. *McDowell v. Ford Motor Co.*, 30-2016-00866952 (O.C. Super. Ct., filed Aug. 1, 2016).

Chase said Ford discovered the Explorer could not pass the company's own carbon monoxide maximum standard. So the company raised its standard from no greater than 25 ppm to 420 ppm. "Ford is notorious. ... If you can't change the car, change the standard. They've done that for years," he said.

He has sued nearly all the other car makers, too. For instance, he is set for trial early next year against Toyota Motor Corp. in Orange County alleging a side airbag killed a toddler sitting in a car seat. *Victoria vs. Toyota Motor Corp.*, 30-2019-01060146 (O.C. Super. Ct., filed March 27, 2019).

And he is back litigating a class action against Toyota over the soy-based coating on its wiring, which rodents allegedly find appetizing. The trial judge tossed out the case, but the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals revived it last August. *Heber v. Toyota Motor Sales USA Inc.*, 8:16-cv01525 (C.D. Cal., filed Aug. 18, 2016).

Chase does handle litigation not about cars. For instance, he has leading roles in the Yahoo data breach consolidated cases and the Johnson & Johnson talcum powder consolidated cases.



— Don DeBenedictis

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