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Consumer Safety Groups Want Car Rental Companies to Fix Recalled Cars

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PRACTICE AREAS

Workers Compensation

Personal Injury

Motor Vehicle Accidents

Wrongful Death

When you rent a car, you assume the vehicle has been properly maintained, don't you? And wouldn't you expect that a car rental company would only rent vehicles that had been fixed following safety recalls?

Well, if that's the case, perhaps you need to lower your expectations. Because currently, car rental companies have no obligation to provide you with cars that have been repaired following a safety recall. Not exactly reassuring, is it?

Two consumer safety groups are trying to rectify this problem, as explained in a recent [New York Times blog post](#):

Two consumer safety groups are asking the Federal Trade Commission to order Enterprise Rent-A-Car to start fixing every vehicle with a safety recall before renting them to consumers. The groups say the request highlights the lack of a requirement that rental companies must fix recalled vehicles before renting them.

In early August, the two groups filed a joint [petition](#) with the FTC, asking that the



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FTC investigate the situation and require that Enterprise Rent-a-Car, one of the largest car rental agencies in the U.S., refrain from renting cars that are subject to safety recalls and have not yet been repaired.

The goal is to prevent **rental car accidents**, such as the one that occurred when Jacqueline Houck and her sister, Raechel, were killed when their rental car caught fire. A safety recall had been issued on the car a few months before the accident, but Enterprise failed to follow up and seek repair of the vehicle. As a result of their admitted negligence, power steering fluid leaked into the engine department, resulting in a fire in the engine department and the sisters' subsequent, tragic deaths.

The girls' parents brought a lawsuit as a result of the accident and were awarded \$15 million by a jury. After the verdict, the girls' mother asked: "Why is the rental-car industry allowed to rent those cars, and not only rent them, but not even disclose to the public that these cars are recalled and not repaired?" she said in an interview. "It just doesn't make sense."

She's right. It doesn't make sense. Hopefully, now that a petition has been filed, the FTC will take steps to ensure that this type of horrific and preventable accident never occurs again.

Howard Ankin of Ankin Law Office LLC (www.ankinlaw.com) handles **workers' compensation** and **personal injury cases**. Mr. Ankin can be reached at (312) 346-8780 and howard@ankinlaw.com.