

## Alabama family gets \$40M in wrongful death case against Kia

On behalf of Johnston, Moore & Thompson posted

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A jury recently handed down a \$40 million verdict against Kia Motors to the family of a deceased teen. The case, which was tried in an Alabama court, revolved around a motor vehicle accident that occurred more than five years ago. The [wrongful death](#) action was based upon allegations of a manufacturing defect that affected the seat belt latching mechanisms of certain Kia models.

The father of the victim testified that he had purchased a used Kia automobile for his 16-year-old daughter. He had the car inspected by a mechanic and had repairs done to make sure that the car was safe. He was not aware of the seat belt defect that plagued the model that he purchased for his daughter.

Kia reportedly knew that the defect existed in several of their car models and issued a recall notice for a portion of the defective products; however, some model years were left out of the recall program, including the used car that had been purchased for the 16-year-old victim in this wrongful death case. Therefore, the car owner had no way of knowing about the defect.

One tragic evening, the young driver lost control of her vehicle and crashed. She was reportedly wearing her seat belt, but because of the defect, the latching mechanism that secures the belt released the seat belt on impact. The young driver died as a result of the injuries that she sustained in the crash.

The family of the young driver hopes that this judgment will send a message to all car manufacturers to take additional steps to recall dangerous defects when necessary.

### Source

Press-Register: "[Mobile County jury slaps Kia with \\$40 million wrongful death verdict](#),"  
Rena Havner Philips, 24 Jun. 2011