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Contact: Jamie Court; Carmen Balber

Top 5 Cases of Corporate Lawsuit Abuse Uncovered

Santa Monica, CA – The Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights (FTCR) announced its list of the top 5 cases of corporate lawsuit abuse in response to GOP Congressman who have declared it “Lawsuit Abuse Week” and are targeting only cases brought by consumers for reform.

“For all big business’s talk about frivolous litigation, Congress should look at industries’ own litigiousness,” said FTCR president Jamie Court, author of *Corporate Power Steals Your Personal Freedom And What You Can Do About it* (Tarcher/Penguin/2004). “The American public should realize big corporations waste more time and money on frivolous litigation than any other group in America. The only reason reforming corporations’ frivolous litigation practices is not on the table on Capitol Hill is because big business is the unofficial sponsor of ‘lawsuit abuse week’ and of similar propaganda aimed at limiting the ability of injured individuals to hold big corporations accountable,”

The following are FTCR’s “Top 5 Cases of Corporate Lawsuit Abuse.”

Allstate sued Kraft Foods, the maker of the Toastette toaster pastry, and Pop-Tart creator Kellogg to avoid having to pay homeowners’ fire claims. Allstate claimed Kraft and Kellogg were responsible for the fires by making dangerous, flammable toaster pastries.

Caterpillar sued the Walt Disney Company for portraying bulldozers in a bad light. Caterpillar tried to block the release of “George of the Jungle 2,” claiming that the film gave the company a bad name because its machines are used to attack the jungle. A judge found that “even the most credulous viewer” would understand that the people operating the machinery, and not the machinery itself, intended to destroy the jungle.

Mattel sued artist Tom Forsythe for his photographs of Barbie in poses the toymaker claimed defamed her character. The toymaker also sued recording label MCA when musical group Aqua released the song “Barbie Girl” that the company claimed defamed the doll with sexual innuendo. Both suits were dismissed, and Mattel had to pay \$1.8 million to the artist in attorney fees, for trying to intimidate him into not using Barbie’s image in his art.

Kellogg’s sued the owners of **Toucan Golf** for trademark infringement. The cereal maker claimed that its Toucan Sam logo for the Froot Loops cereal would be damaged by Toucan Golf’s golf-playing bird. A court found that no one could possibly confuse breakfast cereal and golfing.

Amway and **Proctor & Gamble** are engaged in an ongoing fight – which has encompassed 20 years and has stretched to the courts – over rumors that P&G is in league with Satan. P&G claims that Amway is accusing it of ties to Lucifer. A judge dismissed the fight's most recent incarnation in court, and expressed her hope that the corporate giants would continue their fight at the commercial level, and stop wasting judicial resources.