

CA DA Says Toyota To Pay \$16M Settlement

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LOS ANGELES (AP) — A \$16 million settlement over the safety recall of Toyota vehicles that were at risk for unintended acceleration and braking issues was announced Friday by Orange County prosecutors and Toyota Motor Corp.

The suit was one of a [flood of cases](#) [1] brought against the automaker after more than 14 million vehicles were recalled in 2009 and 2010 - many of them still waiting to be heard or settled.

In the suit, Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas claimed deceptive business practices, alleging Toyota had concealed safety issues related to its floor mats and "sticky" gas pedal issues. The suit sought \$2,500 per violation under California's consumer protection laws

Under the settlement, Toyota continues to deny all the claims made by the suit.

"Having addressed floor mat and 'sticky pedal' issues with effective and durable solutions, we are gratified that Toyota vehicles are once again widely recognized as among the safest and most reliable on the road," Christopher P Reynolds, an attorney and vice president for Toyota, said in a statement.

In the past, the carmaker blamed driver error, faulty floor mats and stuck accelerator pedals for the problems.

A highway tragedy in suburban San Diego sparked the recalls and numerous lawsuits against the Japanese carmaker.

An off-duty California Highway Patrol officer and three family members were killed after he lost control of the car, a Toyota-built Lexus, in a grisly accident. The car reached speeds of more than 120 mph before it hit an SUV, launched off an embankment, rolled several times and burst into flames.

That case was settled for \$10 million before similar cases were consolidated in federal court.

At the end of 2012, Toyota agreed to pay a \$1 billion payout to settle claims from owners who said the value of their vehicles dropped after the recall.

In the Orange County case, half the \$16 million will go to a gang reduction program and the other half will be used to pay the costs of the case and the pursuit of future economic crime cases.

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