

Toyota Acceleration Trial Draws To A Close

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A jury could begin deliberating as early as Tuesday to determine whether Toyota Motor Corp. should be held liable for the death of a California woman who was killed when her Camry apparently accelerated and crashed despite her efforts to stop.

Closing arguments began Monday in a [trial](#) [1] that is the first to go before a jury in state court dealing with unintended sudden acceleration. Known as a bellwether case, the outcome could help predict whether Toyota should be held responsible for sudden unintended acceleration as part of a larger group of litigation filed in state courts. The company already has agreed to pay more than \$1 billion in lawsuits filed in federal court.

Noriko Uno, 66, died four years ago when she went onto a median and struck a telephone pole and a tree. Her family's attorneys blame Toyota for her death because the company failed to install a brake override safety system in her car. They are seeking \$20 million in damages.

Toyota has defended its vehicles, saying it had a state of the art braking system and argued an override component would not have prevented the crash. The company's lawyers blamed the accident on driver error, saying Uno likely mistook the gas pedal for the brake.

"The brakes would have stopped the car in this accident if Mrs. Uno would have used them," said attorney Vincent Galvin Jr., who is representing Toyota.

Plaintiff's lawyer Garo Mardirossian said during closing arguments that Uno pulled her emergency brake before she died, proving she tried to regain control of the car and leaving a message for jurors.

The message: "I did everything to save my life and the lives of others," said Mardirossian, according to the Los Angeles Times (<http://lat.ms/18mxKLS> [2]).

The Japanese automaker has blamed the driver, stuck accelerators, floor mats that trapped the gas pedal for the sudden unintended acceleration claims that led to the recall of millions of its vehicles worldwide.

Other lawsuits contending Toyota's electronic throttle control system was defective and to blame for the sudden acceleration have been filed in federal court where a judge is dealing with wrongful death and economic loss claims that have been consolidated.

Toyota has denied the allegation and neither the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration nor NASA found evidence of electronic problems. A trial in one of the

Toyota Acceleration Trial Draws To A Close

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

lead cases is scheduled for November.

Other cases expected to go to trial in state courts this year include one in Oklahoma and another in Michigan. There are more than 80 similar cases filed in state courts.

Source URL (retrieved on 09/20/2014 - 4:59pm):

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2013/10/toyota-acceleration-trial-draws-close>

Links:

[1] <http://www.impomag.com/news/2013/07/toyota-sudden-acceleration-case-begins-ca>

[2] <http://lat.ms/18mxKLS>