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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 9, 2020
#20-12

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AG SLATERY JOINS BIPARTISAN COALITION TO HOLD MANUFACTURERS ACCOUNTABLE FOR DEFECTIVE PRODUCTS

40 attorneys general ask Supreme Court not to limit plaintiffs' right to sue in their home-state courts

April 9, 2020 — Tennessee Attorney General Herbert H. Slatery III has joined a bipartisan coalition of attorneys general from 39 states and the District of Columbia defending the rights of Tennesseans and all Americans to hold companies accountable for defective products in their home-state courts.

In an *amicus curiae* brief to the U.S. Supreme Court, General Slatery and the coalition ask the Court to uphold decisions by the Minnesota and Montana Supreme Courts, which ruled that Ford Motor Company may be sued in those states' courts for defects in Ford vehicles that led to serious accidents in those states. Ford has appealed the Minnesota and Montana Supreme Court decisions to the U.S. Supreme Court. Ford argues that product-liability lawsuits against it should only be able to be filed in the states where the individual vehicle was designed, manufactured, or first sold.

The amicus brief filed by the coalition explains that the Minnesota and Montana decisions are consistent with U.S. Supreme Court precedents that "recognize States' strong sovereign and constitutional interests in ensuring that their own courts remain open to citizens injured within their borders." They also argue that reversing the Minnesota and Montana decisions would hurt the ability of attorneys general to protect their states' residents in state courts against out-of-state companies that break their states' laws — for example, in the cases that 49 attorneys general have filed in their state courts against opioid manufacturers or distributors.

"Tennessee needs to be able to act, unencumbered, when our citizens are harmed by out-of-state companies that break our laws," said General Slatery. "Whether we are talking about manufacturers of defective automotive products or those who deceptively market or distribute opioids, states must continue to hold them accountable no matter where they are located."

A [copy of the brief](#) is available on the website of Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison.





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Joining Attorney General Slatery and Attorneys General Ellison and Paxton in the amicus brief are the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

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