

NEWS & INSIGHTS

ATTORNEYS AUTHOR LAW360 ARTICLE ABOUT PANDEMIC'S POTENTIAL EFFECT ON PLAINTIFF 'REPTILE THEORY' TACTICS

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Lightfoot, Franklin & White, LLC partners **J. Chandler Bailey** and **Rachel M. Lary**, along with associate **Logan T. Matthews**, published an article in *Law360* about a possible legal repercussion of the COVID-19 crisis.

Their article examines the concept of the “reptile theory,” the idea that jurors are at their most persuadable and most likely to award large plaintiff verdicts when they feel that the defendants' actions directly endanger their own safety and that of their families.

“But America's experience with combating the coronavirus — and the difficult decisions that have arisen as a result — may provide another useful tool for defense lawyers to combat this theory,” write the authors.

“Specifically, what our response to the coronavirus has shown is that decision-making, where professional judgment is involved, is not simply a binary choice between safety or danger. Rather, it is nuanced and multifaceted.”

Read the full article [here](#).

For nearly 20 years, Bailey has represented product manufacturers and suppliers around the country in high-stakes cases involving catastrophic injuries and wrongful death. He has served as national and regional counsel for several of the country's largest companies, representing them in serious, high-exposure lawsuits in more than 20 states.

Lary's practice includes defending against consumer fraud allegations in states across the Southeast. She is licensed in Alabama and Mississippi. In addition to her business litigation practice, she defends automotive manufacturers in product liability actions.

Matthews serves clients in a variety of practice areas, including product liability, employment and labor law, government litigation, and white-collar defense. He previously clerked for the University of Alabama System and for the Honorable W. Harold Albritton III, in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama.