

NEWS & INSIGHTS

LIGHTFOOT WINS DEFENSE JURY VERDICT FOR U-HAUL IN \$130 MILLION PERSONAL INJURY CASE

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Lightfoot, Franklin & White LLC has won a significant defense victory on behalf of client U-Haul in a personal injury trial in Arizona. A jury in the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County yesterday found in favor of U-Haul in a case where the plaintiff sought more than \$130 million in damages.

The case arose out of a 2014 rollover accident involving a pickup that was using a tow dolly rented from U-Haul to tow another vehicle. The accident left a passenger with permanent paralysis due to a spinal cord injury. The plaintiffs in the case had alleged U-Haul's decision to rent the tow dolly, which did not have brakes, to the plaintiff caused the accident. The plaintiff had sought \$30 million in compensatory damages and \$100 million in punitive damages.

The jury delivered a verdict in favor of U-Haul on all counts.

"We are grateful to the jury for this verdict and that they saw the case for what it was: a tragic accident," said Lightfoot partner **Banks Sewell**. "We have always contended the rollover was the result of the pickup driver's failure to heed the warnings included with our client's tow dolly, including a stipulation not to drive over 55 miles per hour."

During trial, U-Haul presented evidence that the pick-up's driver passed another vehicle on the emergency shoulder at speeds in excess of 80 miles per hour and that this led to the rollover. In addition, U-Haul demonstrated that the plaintiff would not have been seriously injured if he had been wearing a seatbelt — which he was not.

"U-Haul's equipment had been extensively tested and was found to be safe without independent brakes when used correctly," added Lightfoot partner **J. Chandler Bailey**, who, along with associate David A. Rich and Ryan S. Patterson of the law firm Quarles & Brady, was also part of the U-Haul trial team.

The case is *Wing et al. v. U-Haul International Inc. et al.*, case number CV2016-050917, in the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County.