

NEWS & INSIGHTS

LIGHTFOOT'S MCKINLEY DUNN AND GABRIEL DOWDELL EARN DISMISSAL IN CONSUMER ARBITRATION MATTER

June 10, 2026

Lightfoot, Franklin & White LLC partner **McKinley Dunn** and associate **Gabriel D. Dowdell** successfully represented a nationwide home warranty company in a consumer arbitration stemming from breach of contract claims pertaining to multiple work orders under a home warranty agreement.

The claimant sought \$500,000 in compensatory and treble damages, plus attorney's fees, after his water heater ruptured in January 2025 and his HVAC system failed in April 2025. In May 2025, the claimant filed a demand for arbitration alleging that the company mishandled the two service claims, fraudulently misrepresented coverage under the home warranty agreement, and violated Louisiana's Unfair Trade and Consumer Protection Law.

The client asked Lightfoot to take over the arbitration from prior counsel on Feb. 11, 2026, with the arbitration hearing set for two weeks later. To counter the claimant's arguments, Dunn and Dowdell filed motions objecting to treble damages under Louisiana's Unfair Trade and Consumer Protection Law and to strike "pattern and practice" evidence pertaining to other customers. Ultimately, after multiple preparation sessions with a client corporate representative, Dunn and Dowdell conducted a one-day arbitration hearing in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on Feb. 27, 2026.

Following the hearing and post-hearing briefing from both sides, the arbitrator entered a final award denying and dismissing all claims against the home warranty company.

Dunn represents a broad range of clients, including product manufacturers, businesses and utility providers in high-exposure matters involving product liability, catastrophic injury, medical malpractice, commercial breach of contract and consumer arbitration.

Dowdell's trial practice focuses on a wide array of practice areas, including contract disputes, product liability, wrongful death and environmental and toxic torts.