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SNELL & WILMER SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDS FORD MOTOR COMPANY IN SECOND CRYSTAL CITY, TEXAS TRIAL

PHOENIX (July 28, 2011) – Snell & Wilmer announced today that it recently obtained a defense verdict for Ford Motor Company (Ford), successfully defeating claims of defective design, negligence and punitive damages related to an Explorer rollover crash. The July 21, 2011 decision came after a nine-day trial in which plaintiffs sought millions of dollars in damages.

Castillo v. Ford Motor Company was heard in the District Court for Zavala County in Crystal City, Texas, a jurisdiction known to be a difficult venue for corporate defendants. The case was tried by Snell & Wilmer partner Brad Petersen and San Antonio, Texas attorney Rick Reyna. In May 2008, an individual was driving home in his parents' 2002 Ford Explorer with six of his fellow teenage friends when he lost control on a caliche, gravel road. His final steer caused the Explorer to slide sideways and roll over three times at about 37 MPH. Six of the seven occupants were wearing seatbelts and survived the crash without serious injury. One occupant, the Plaintiffs' son, was not. During the rollover, the Plaintiffs' son was partially ejected and suffered fatal injuries. Plaintiffs sued Ford, claiming the Explorer was defective because it was not equipped with a laminated glass system in the side windows that they say would have kept their son in the vehicle.

The defense team showed that the crash and injuries were caused by the driver's actions and by Plaintiffs' son not wearing his available seatbelt. The Ford Explorer was safe and state of the art. The tempered safety glass used in the side windows met all industry standards, had safety benefits for occupants, and was used in the vast majority of 2002 model year vehicles. In addition, the defense team showed that Plaintiffs' alternative glass and glazing design would not have prevented the injuries in this tragic but avoidable crash.

After just three hours of deliberations, the jury returned with a defense verdict for Ford on all claims.

The 2011 trial victory adds a final chapter to an unfortunate story that began years earlier in Crystal City. In 2005, a different group of plaintiff and defense lawyers tried *Garcia v. Ford Motor Company*. The 2005 case involved an Explorer that rolled over, two occupants who were ejected and suffered fatal injuries, and claims that the glass and glazing system should have been designed to contain the unbelted occupants. The 2005 trial ended in a large plaintiff verdict, which was highly publicized and drew a lot of attention in the legal and political communities due to allegations of jury tampering, collusion and witness intimidation. The 2005 plaintiff verdict was appealed and later settled.

About Snell & Wilmer L.L.P.

Founded in 1938, Snell & Wilmer is a full-service business law firm with more than 400 attorneys practicing in nine locations throughout the western United States and in Mexico, including Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona; Salt Lake City, Utah; Los Angeles and Orange County, California; Denver, Colorado; Las Vegas and Reno, Nevada; and Los Cabos, Mexico. The firm represents clients ranging from large, publicly traded corporations to small businesses, individuals and entrepreneurs. For more information, visit www.swlaw.com.

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