Seltzer is currently leading Susman Godfrey LLP’s efforts as co-lead counsel for the end payer or indirect purchaser plaintiffs in a massive multidistrict class action arising from claims of price-fixing and bid-rigging conspiracies among companies that make automotive components. The case has been pending in U.S. District Court in Detroit since 2011.

The end payers include consumers and businesses that purchased or leased new automobiles which contain component parts alleged to have been subject to anticompetitive acts by their manufacturers.

The most recent settlements, announced in February, call for defendants Sanden USA, which makes automotive air conditioning, and automotive components maker Tenneco Inc. to pay about $26 million to the class Seltzer represents, pushing the class’ total recovery so far to more than $1.085 billion. The litigation continues against the remaining non-settling defendants.

“Although government proceedings really started this case, our role was to determine what claims could be brought on behalf of consumers,” Seltzer said. “The conspiracy spanned more than a decade and involved illegal conduct throughout the world.”

Seltzer added that “prosecuting and managing these cases has been exceptionally challenging” because they “involve multiple, separate automotive parts that are alleged to have been subject to collusive pricing practices by dozens of defendants from across the globe who entered into separate conspiracies and are, in many ways, unprecedented in their scope and complexity.”

The case continues. “We are very proud of the historic recoveries we have obtained thus far for American consumers and businesses and our work is not yet done,” Seltzer said. Additional settlements with many millions of dollars are in the works, he said.

— John Roemer

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