



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## WLF Asks High Court to Reinforce Limits on State Courts' Exercise of Specific Personal Jurisdiction

*(Ford Motor Co. v. Montana Eighth Judicial District Court)*

**“Requiring a causal connection between the defendant’s forum contacts and the plaintiff’s claims safeguards federalism, ensures predictability, and discourages forum shopping.”**

—Cory L. Andrews, WLF Vice President of Litigation

WASHINGTON, DC—Earlier today, Washington Legal Foundation (WLF) urged the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn separate decisions of the Montana and Minnesota Supreme Courts that would subject a non-resident defendant, Ford Motor Company, to suit in cases where the plaintiff’s claims lack any connection to the defendant’s contacts with the forum state. WLF filed its *amicus curiae* brief with the *pro bono* assistance of attorneys Amanda K. Rice, Cory M. Carone, and Christopher M. Johnson of the Detroit, Michigan office of Jones Day.

Because the plaintiffs’ claims relate solely to Ford’s out-of-state conduct, Ford argued in state court that the plaintiffs’ claims failed to satisfy the constitutional requirement of a substantial connection between the defendant’s in-state contacts and the plaintiffs’ claims. The Montana and Minnesota Supreme Courts both disagreed, holding that Ford must stand trial in the forum state for Ford’s out-of-state conduct.

As WLF’s brief argues, the U.S. Supreme Court has explicitly rejected a state court’s exercising personal jurisdiction based on in-state contacts that are unrelated to the plaintiff’s claims. Federalism interests are best served by ensuring that no one State can encroach on the others by regulating the conduct of non-resident defendants simply because they happen to conduct unrelated business in the State. That is why due process requires some causal connection between a defendant’s conduct inside the State and the plaintiff’s claims. Among other things, requiring such a connection promotes predictability and discourages forum shopping.

*Celebrating its 43rd year, WLF is America’s premier public-interest law firm and policy center advocating for free-market principles, limited government, individual liberty, and the rule of law.*

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