

Trial Spotlight: Defense Verdict Reduces \$134 Million Demand to \$2 Million in Catastrophic Motorcycle Injury Case

Press Release | 1 min read

Sep 17, 2026

Hinshaw partner Frederick “Fred” Ufkes secured a favorable trial verdict on behalf of a young driver in a catastrophic motorcycle accident case arising from a collision at a busy California intersection. Plaintiffs sought between \$80 million and \$134 million in damages. The jury ultimately awarded a total of \$2 million. Associate Kimia Karami assisted Fred in the case.

The case stemmed from a collision that occurred when our client made a left turn from a stop-controlled side street onto a busy roadway. As she entered the intersection, her vehicle collided with a motorcycle carrying a husband and wife who were attempting to pass a vehicle making a right turn at the intersection.

Both plaintiffs suffered severe injuries, including lower-leg amputations, and they sought very substantial damages at trial. The defense successfully demonstrated that liability was disputed and that the motorcycle operator shared responsibility for the collision. The defense argued that if the jury found our client failed to see the approaching motorcycle, the motorcyclist likewise failed to observe our client’s vehicle as it entered the intersection.

After hearing the evidence, the jury agreed that the motorcyclists bore significant responsibility for the accident, assigning 50% comparative fault to plaintiffs. The jury’s verdict resulted in a combined award of \$2 million, a 98.5 percent reduction of plaintiffs’ maximum damages demand.

The case illustrates the importance of defense strategies to combat reptile-theory tactics, including educating jurors that plaintiffs are only entitled to “reasonable compensation” for any harm caused.

The case is *Gebara v. Sotomayor, et al.*, Case No. CIVDS2021355, in the California Superior Court for the County of San Bernardino.

Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP is a U.S.-based law firm with offices nationwide. The firm’s national reputation spans the insurance industry, the financial services sector, professional services, and other highly

regulated industries. Hinshaw provides holistic legal solutions—from litigation and dispute resolution, and business advisory and transactional services, to regulatory compliance—for clients of all sizes. Visit www.hinshawlaw.com for more information and follow @Hinshaw on LinkedIn and X.

Related People

Kimia Karami

Frederick J. Ufkes

Related Capabilities

Complex Tort & General Casualty

Litigation & Trial

Related Locations

Los Angeles

Related Insights

Trial Spotlight: Hinshaw Secures Complete Defense Verdict in \$65 Million Product Liability Claim