



Baltimore Co. jury awards \$20M to company for NDA breach

By: Heather Cobun Daily Record Legal Affairs Writer December 13, 2018

A Baltimore County jury returned a \$20 million verdict Wednesday against Beretta USA for breaching a nondisclosure agreement with a local aerospace manufacturing company.

The lawsuit alleged Beretta, a firearms manufacturing company, misappropriated work done by Adcor Defense Inc. to develop an improved AR-15 rifle.

The \$20 million verdict is all compensatory damages for the research and development Adcor put into the project and anticipated profits from the partnership.

"When the little guy was wronged, it's nice to see the little guy win," said Briggs Bedigian, an attorney for Baltimore city-based Adcor.

The jury deliberated for approximately three and a half hours before returning the verdict, according to Bedigian, of Gilman & Bedigian LLC in Timonium.

Lauren Bell, also of Gilman & Bedigian, said Beretta's defense was the information was not confidential and the only reason the company retained it was because of the threat of litigation.

"(Adcor owner Jimmy Stavrakis) feels like they had their day in court and justice was served," she said. "It's been a long, hard-fought battle for them."

Beretta's T. Sky Woodward, an attorney for Beretta, did not respond to a request for comment.

The Beretta family approached Adcor in 2012 about working together in the marketplace and integrating Adcor products into Beretta's business plan. Adcor provided samples of its AR-15 in October 2012. The complaint alleged that by then Beretta had "formulated an internal plan to obtain control of Plaintiff Adcor's proprietary and trade secret information, willfully, knowingly and through deception, concealment and false promises."

Beretta appeared willing to be an exclusive partner in development and production of the rifle and made representations about a contract between the parties. The companies signed nondisclosure agreements in the fall of 2013, and Adcor provided proprietary information to Beretta in the following months.

In October 2014, Adcor was informed Beretta did not intend to use its services on the project due to a cost issue but would still move forward with the production and sale of the AR-15 developed over the previous year.

Adcor accused Beretta of using Adcor's designs, suppliers and trade secrets "to enter the AR-15 market as soon as possible" and save time and money by using the partnership as a "pretext."

Adcor Industries Inc., et al. v. Beretta USA Corp.

Court: Baltimore County Circuit

Case No.: 03C15006837

Judge: Vicki Ballou-Watts

Proceeding: Jury trial

Outcome: Verdict for plaintiff, \$20 million in damages

Dates:

Incident: October 2012 to October 2014

Suit filed: June 25, 2015

Verdict: Dec. 12, 2018

Plaintiffs' Attorneys: Briggs Bedigian, Jon Stefanuca and Lauren Bell of Gilman & Bedigian LLC in Timonium and Thomas Donnelly and Kristin Tracy of the Law Offices of Thomas Donnelly LLC in Baltimore.

Defendants' Attorneys: T. Sky Woodward of Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP in Washington D.C.

Counts: Breach of nondisclosure agreement

Tagged with: BALTIMORE COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT BERETTA VERDICTS AND SETTLEMENTS

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