

# CPM Helps Secure First Civil Settlement Relating to Auto Shipping Price-Fixing Claims

Japanese Transport Company K-Line Settles  
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Attorneys representing a group of consumers and auto and truck and equipment dealerships in antitrust claims against more than a dozen international shipping firms have reached a settlement with Japan's Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd., known as K-Line.

The plaintiffs include the indirect purchasers of millions of vehicles transported to the United States. They claim that Tokyo-based K-Line and other maritime carriers have unlawfully conspired to rig bids, fix prices and overcharge for their services. The lawsuit notes that the market for transporting new vehicles for sale in the U.S. is almost \$1 billion annually.

"We believe that this conspiracy affected almost all purchasers of new automobiles imported into the United States by ocean carrier. For too long American consumers have been the victims of international price-fixing cartels like this one. We hope through civil enforcement like we are doing in this case, consumers can be made whole and price-fixers will get the message that they will have to answer for their conduct in an American courtroom" We are delighted to announce the first major settlement in the vehicle carriers case with K-Line," said attorney Steve Williams of Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, LLP, interim co-lead counsel for the end-payor plaintiffs.

The settlement with K-Line was announced during a hearing before Judge Esther Salas of the U. S. District Court for the District of New Jersey in Newark.

The other defendants include among others Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha (NYK Line) and Compania Sud Americana de Vapores (CSAV), both of which previously pled guilty to participating in the conspiracy

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## Practice Areas

Antitrust & Global Competition

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that is still being investigated by the federal government.

The case is *In Re: Vehicle Carrier Services Antitrust Litigation*, No. 13-cv-3306 (MDL No. 2471), United States District Court, District of New Jersey.