

PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS STAND UP FOR YOU AGAINST POWERFUL BUSINESS AND CORPORATE INTERESTS

Everybody knows the term “weasel out.” New York ad exec Gene Case says that the term means *to withdraw from an obligation in an underhanded way*. He uses that term in a very effective ad campaign in connection with proposed reforms in workers’ compensation in the Northeast.

The ad exec’s definition of “weasel out” reminded me of two serious personal injury cases:

Bill’s Story: Bill (not his real name) never had a sick day in his life. He was working on the dock, fell off the back end of a truck and permanently damaged his spine. The doctors declared him totally disabled.

One of the drugs he was given for pain caused an adverse reaction. He was hospitalized and near death from the accidental drug overdose by the treating physician.

After battling through that first ordeal, he wound up taking a dozen or so drugs prescribed by several doctors. Two or more of those drugs have a propensity to cause pancreatitis, an inflammation of the pancreas. He landed in the hospital a second time, in serious condition, because of the combination of drugs. He battled his way through that one and now the hospitals and doctors are suing, and threatening to sue, him for around \$30,000 in unpaid medical expenses.

Three doctors have testified that the drugs either did cause, or could have combined to cause, the pancreatitis. There is no evidence to the contrary.

Bill’s insurance company’s stand? Bill’s bills are not compensable.

Julie’s Story: Julie (not her real name) had some injuries as a result of an automobile collision fifteen years ago. They were mostly

orthopedic, but enough to disable her. For most of the fifteen years, she fought back and made her life almost normal, working in the garden and enjoying life as best she could with her orthopedic injuries.

A couple of years back, she was driving along a rural highway when a reckless driver crossed the centerline and hit her head-on, demolishing both cars.

She was fortunate not to have been killed.

The accident aggravated her old injuries, and she developed seizures and a type of palsy. Her doctor wrote a lengthy report in which he acknowledged that, prior to the head-on collision, the client had some pre-existing problems. The accident aggravated her health situation and changed her life. She is now in a sort of existing posture, unable to do much of anything except take her drugs and try to live from one day to the next. The doctor says that Julie is permanently disabled as a result of the head-on collision and he does not think she will be able to get back to her baseline condition.

Julie also has about \$30,000 in bills. Julie's insurance company offered \$10,000 in full settlement for her medical expenses and lifetime disability.

A Hart Research poll reveals that 69 percent of Americans think our country is on the wrong track, that we are focused on corporate interests instead of human interests. Our culture is dominated by insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, big banks and big oil.

Hart Research says that 73 percent of North Carolinians know little or nothing about the civil court system.

Bill Faison, a member of the General Assembly from Durham, said of the insurance and business lobbyists and the legislators under their sway, "They want to injure our clients and put attorneys out of business." So when the insurance companies and other big business interests abuse the process, the only recourse is the courthouse.

Personal injury attorneys, standing up for the average person against powerful business and corporate interests, will not always win the day,

but they always try to level the playing field and ensure that the public gets a fair shake in the courthouse.

The key to the courthouse is paid for with public dollars and it belongs to you.

The insurance companies and big business interests are trying to take the key away. **Ω**