

State Supreme Court Justice at Center of State Farm Lawsuit

Sep 15, 2011 10:40 am

State Supreme Court Justice Lloyd Karmeier, whose bio is one sister who went blind from Scarlet Fever away from being the same as Laura Ingalls Wilder's, is at the center of a class action lawsuit against State Farm Insurance. The lawsuit contends State Farm hid donations made to Karmeier's campaign for the state Supreme Court, which was the most expensive state judicial race in U.S. history.

Karmeier refused to recuse himself last year in voiding a 1997 judgment against State Farm where the insurance giant was found to have breached its contract with policyholders when it directed the use of non-original parts in vehicles damaged in crashes. A Williamson County court awarded \$730 million to some policy holders, while a jury awarded \$465 million more.

Attorneys in the suit, including former U.S. Senator and Law & Order Fred Dalton Thompson, allege State Farm concealed its "extraordinary support of Justice (Lloyd) Karmeier's campaign and to thwart Justice Karmeier's disqualification." State Farm contributed between \$2.5 - \$4 million to Karmeier's 2004 campaign. After Karmeier was elected, State Farm later provided documentation it donated \$350,000 to his campaign when the plaintiff's attorneys asked he recuse himself from the case

The U.S. Supreme Court has set some precedent here. Two years ago, they ruled in the case of Caperton v. A. T. Massey Coal Co. that attorney Brent Benjamin, who represented A.T. Massey Coal Co. and was later elected an appellate court judge, created an unconstitutional "probability of bias" by not recusing himself from the case when it came before his bench,

Source: http://chicagoist.com/2011/09/15/state_supreme_court_justice_at_cent.php