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HEADLINE: Inventor's Appeal Rejected by Court

BYLINE: AP
DATELINE: WASHINGTON, Oct. 2

BODY:

The Maryland man who invented the intermittent windshield wiper has lost a Supreme Court appeal aimed at reviving his lawsuit against foreign car manufacturers that he said had stolen his design.

The Court, without comment, rejected arguments that the inventor, Robert Kearns, was unfairly denied the chance to have his lawsuit against the foreign car makers heard on its merits.

Virtually all cars sold worldwide now have intermittent wipers as standard or optional equipment.

"I'm disappointed because it means that all of the foreign automobile assemblers, they will derive the benefits of the invention," Mr. Kearns said.

Mr. Kearns, of Queenstown, Md., had already won about \$30 million from the Chrysler Corporation and Ford Motor Company for the unauthorized use of his invention.

Mr. Kearns received patents for his design in 1967. He shopped it around to auto makers but did not reach a licensing deal. He sued Ford in 1978 and Chrysler in 1982, claiming patent infringement.

Mr. Kearns' lawsuits against General Motors and foreign car makers were dismissed.

The appeal rejected today involved Mr. Kearns' lawsuits against, among others, Ferrari, Volvo, Alfa-Romeo, Citroen, Honda, Isuzu, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Maserati, Peugeot, Renault, Rolls Royce, Saab and Toyota. The case is Kearns v. Toyota, 94-2056.

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USA TODAY
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HEADLINE: Chrysler loses wiper lawsuit

BYLINE: From wire reports

BODY:

In his second victory against one of the Big Three automakers, inventor Robert Kearns won a patent suit against Chrysler for infringement on his invention of the intermittent windshield wiper.

A federal jury will meet next month to decide the amount of damages Chrysler should pay. Kearns, 64, is asking \$ 36 million and a 12-year contract to supply intermittent wipers to the company.

In a similar action last year, Kearns sued Ford for \$ 140 million. He and the company eventually agreed to a \$ 10.2 million settlement after the jury was deadlocked on how much Ford should pay.

Despite Tuesday's victory, Kearns said he feels like a loser. He said he has spent nearly \$ 8 million of his Ford settlement on legal fees. The jury's decision to return next month means more expensive legal costs in the Chrysler case.

Industry experts said if a penalty is imposed on Chrysler, the amount would be substantially less than the Ford settlement because Chrysler sold fewer vehicles than Ford, the USA's No. 2 automaker.

Kearns, a former engineering professor at Wayne State University in Detroit, got a patent for the intermittent-windshield-wiper system in November 1967.

Kearns claimed to have installed the wiper system in a Ford Galaxy convertible and taken it to Ford. Kearns said Ford engineers repeatedly asked him to discuss the designs and later began offering the wipers in 1969 under their own patents.

Kearns first filed suit in 1978. He has 18 suits pending, including against General Motors and Toyota.
