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Automotive News

Alliance drops suit over Florida warranty reimbursement law

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The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers today asked a federal court to dismiss its six-year-old lawsuit over Florida legislation on warranty reimbursement.

The move to end the lawsuit came after the court recently required some of the alliance's member automakers to provide what the group described as "confidential business information."

"That is unacceptable, so today the alliance filed a motion to have the suit dismissed," the trade association said in an e-mailed statement. "We will continue to oppose any state legislation that is anti-consumer, anti-competitive and could result in higher prices for vehicles and repairs."

The Florida challenge was in the discovery phase after a judge in 2012 deemed the case had merit to move forward.

The alliance filed the lawsuit in 2008 over a dealer-backed law that took effect in May of that year. The state law required automakers to pay dealerships the same rates for warranty parts and labor that the stores charge retail customers.

Within months after the original challenge, "two substantive changes were made to the law by Florida dealers that responded to our concerns," the alliance said today. "Subsequently, the alliance amended the lawsuit to drop those two measures, resulting in the litigation becoming much narrower, focusing largely on the effects of interstate commerce."

The alliance represents 12 automakers, including Toyota, Volkswagen and the Detroit 3.

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