



April 11, 2012

ALEC Hearts Immunity - Read All About It!

Some important updates on a few stories we've been following:

First comes [breaking news](#) that George Zimmerman will be charged with Trayvon Martin's murder today, which we assume means he won't be able to take advantage of the [civil immunity](#) provision in Florida's Stand Your Ground laws.

And on the related [ALEC](#) front, kudos to Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton for [vetoing](#) yet another ALEC bill (see [our coverage](#) of some of his other vetoes). This legislation would have protected the asbestos industry and successor companies from liability, greatly harming asbestos victims. Meanwhile, [Wendy's](#) joined the list of other high-profile ALEC corporate members disassociating itself from that organization. And now, [shareholders](#) may be joining anti-ALEC efforts, as well.

Following up on [our coverage](#) of the struggles of a severely injured former Pennsylvania student, Ashley Zauflik, to overcome a Draconian \$500,000 cap on the school district's liability, today her lawyers went back to court. They are [arguing](#) that not only is the cap unconstitutional, but also that "the district should face sanctions [because it] withheld the existence of a \$10 million insurance policy until after the trial."

Meanwhile, medical device manufacturer St. Jude [lost](#) its efforts to force a retraction by the medical journal that published devastating [research](#), led by renowned cardiologist Dr. Robert Hauser, about the horrendous defects in its implanted heart defibrillators. [Writes](#) the *New York Times*, "the journal's editor, Dr. Douglas P. Zipes, said in an interview late Monday that the publication had looked at St. Jude's complaint and did not plan to pull back the article, which had undergone review by experts associated with the journal before its online publication two weeks ago." This is all part of St. Jude's (backfiring) "scorched earth" [attack](#) on its critics.

Now this next one isn't exactly an update, but the irony is just too good: the exceedingly pro-tort reform, anti-litigation Koch brothers are filing *another* suit against the Cato Institute, which sponsors the exceedingly pro-tort reform, anti-litigation blog, Overlawyered.com. Oh my. Talk amongst yourselves.