

Hausfeld Files for 15,000 Volkswagen Customers in Single Largest Consumer Complaint Ever Filed in EU

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Related Practice Areas: **Competition Disputes**

6 November 2017 (Berlin)- Today, on behalf of more than 15,000 German consumers affected by the VW diesel emissions scandal, Hausfeld filed a complaint in the Braunschweig District Court. The filing is believed to be the largest single consumer complaint ever filed in a European court. The complaint alleges a claims value of over €357 million (\$416 million).

In 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency revealed that Volkswagen had been using a defeat device software which understated the NOx emissions of its diesel vehicles. Volkswagen later admitted that since 2009 over 11 million vehicles worldwide had been affected.

Christopher Rother, Managing Partner of Hausfeld Rechtsanwälte LLP in Berlin said “with the filing of this complaint, consumers deceived by the manufacturer’s misrepresentations send a strong message to Volkswagen that they are entitled to compensation for the fraud that induced them to buy vehicles that should never have been sold in the first place.”

Michael Hausfeld, Chairman of Hausfeld LLP praised the filing, stating: “The resolve of European consumers not to back down in the face of Volkswagen’s defiant refusal to offer similar compensation in Europe for similar harm underscores the need for European-wide collective redress mechanisms. To respect the rights of European consumers and European laws is a testament to the fact that European consumers are not second class citizens to anyone.”

Volkswagen settled with consumers in the United States for over \$12 billion, but has yet to offer similar compensation to European consumers. Unlike U.S. class action lawsuits, Germany does not provide any collective action mechanisms. Therefore, in order for European consumers to file claims against Volkswagen, they must each file individually. Hausfeld has been retained by myRight, a German legal services provider, to create an innovative platform allowing consumers to band together against Volkswagen.

Since 2016 German consumers have been able to sign up through www.myright.de to join a group action against Volkswagen. Affected consumers are still able to register their claims, as Hausfeld plans to file a second complaint in the Spring.

In September, Hausfeld announced it would be working with the national consumer groups of The European Consumer Organisation (“BEUC”) to represent additional car owners affected by the Volkswagen scandal in Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

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About Hausfeld

Hausfeld is a leading global law firm with offices in Berlin, Boston, Brussels, Düsseldorf, London, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. The firm has a broad range of complex litigation expertise, particularly in antitrust/competition, financial services, sports and entertainment, environmental, mass torts, consumer protection, and human rights matters, often with an international dimension. Hausfeld aims to achieve the best possible results for clients through its practical and commercial approach, avoiding litigation where feasible, yet litigating robustly when necessary. Hausfeld's extensive experience with alternative and innovative fee models offers clients a diverse menu of engagement options and maximum flexibility in terms of managing their cost exposure.

Hausfeld is the only claimants' firm to be ranked by the Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners as a top tier firm in private enforcement of antitrust/competition law in both the United States and the United Kingdom. For more information about the firm, including recent trial victories and landmark settlements, please visit: www.hausfeld.com