

\$20,000,000

Range Tip Over  
**PRODUCT LIABILITY**

**FACTS:** Dinora Campos and her boyfriend purchased a free-standing gas range from a department store. Her boyfriend installed the range in her apartment. The range came with an L-shaped bracket which was to be installed behind one of the rear legs to prevent the range from tipping. The bracket was not installed. Several months later, Dinora was home with her children. She was also watching her sister's children. She was the only adult home with seven (7) young children. The children were watching television in the family room. She went into the bathroom. While in the bathroom, her son and her two nephews, who were all between 30 to 40 months old, went into the kitchen. A pot of stew was simmering on the back burner of the range. The children opened the oven door and either stepped and/or climbed on the open oven door. The range tipped forward with the pot of hot stew spilling on the children.

**CONTENTIONS:** Plaintiffs claimed that there have been prior incidents of children opening oven doors on ranges and either stepping or climbing on the open door so as to cause the range to tipover. Plaintiffs claimed that the L-shaped bracket was an ineffective solution since the brackets were not being installed in the field. Plaintiffs claimed that there were several feasible alternative designs which were passive in nature and did not require any installation by the consumer, such as breakaway hinges on the oven door, a child-resistant closure on the oven door, and/or counter weights to prevent the range from tipping. Plaintiffs also claimed that in the absence of a passive alternative design, the range should have contained an interlock to prevent it from operating if the bracket was not in place and that a more obvious warning regarding the tip hazard and need to install the bracket should have been used. Plaintiffs also claimed they did not even see a bracket in the box and the store which sold them the range should have specifically advised them about the hazard of the range tipping and the need to install the bracket. Defendants claimed that the bracket is simple to install and could be properly installed in a matter of minutes. Defendants also claimed that if the bracket had been installed, the accident would not have occurred. Defendants also claimed that the alternative designs proposed by Plaintiffs are not feasible or cost effective. Defendants also claimed that the cause of the accident was the failure to properly watch and supervise the young children.

**INJURIES:** Third degree burn injuries to approximately half the body surface of three children between 30 to 40 months old.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** The manufacturer of the range contributed \$15 million with the department store contributing \$5 million, for a total of \$20 million.

**CAMPOS v. WHITE CONSOLIDATED INDUSTRIES, ET AL.**

**CASE NUMBER:** BC 282606

**LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT**