Horst Shewmaker LLC Addresses New Legal Risks for Alpharetta Personal Injury Victims Under Georgia Seat Belt Evidence Rule

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ALPHARETTA, GA - March 25, 2026 -
Horst Shewmaker LLC, a personal injury law firm serving North Fulton County, is alerting Alpharetta residents to significant legal challenges created by Georgia Senate Bill 68's new seat belt evidence rule, particularly as recent NHTSA data reveals that 62 percent of Georgia traffic fatality victims in 2024 were either unbelted or had unknown belt use at the time of their crashes.

The legislation, signed into law on April 21, 2025, makes seat belt non-use admissible evidence in motor vehicle personal injury cases to establish negligence, comparative fault, causation, assumption of risk, and apportionment of damages. This change applies to all cases filed after the effective date and represents a fundamental shift in how injury claims are evaluated in Georgia courts.

The implications are particularly significant given Georgia's modified comparative negligence standard, where a finding of 50 percent or greater fault eliminates all recovery for injured parties. With the new seat belt provision, defense teams and insurance companies now possess an additional tool to potentially push plaintiffs past this critical threshold in cases where victims were not wearing seat belts. Horst Shewmaker

Alpharetta personal injury lawyer teams are preparing comprehensive strategies to address these challenges for clients throughout the region.

"The 62 percent unbelted fatality rate in Georgia demonstrates just how many accident victims are now exposed to this defense tactic under SB 68," said Zachary S. Shewmaker, Co-Founding Attorney at Horst Shewmaker LLC. "Our attorneys specifically prepare for this defense from day one by building injury causation arguments that establish the defendant's negligence as the primary cause of harm, regardless of belt status. We develop thorough medical documentation and expert testimony that can withstand comparative fault challenges."

The timing of this legal change coincides with continued safety concerns on North Fulton County roadways. Georgia reported 1,466 traffic deaths in 2024, with Fulton County accounting for approximately nine percent of the state's total fatalities according to NHTSA and Georgia Office of Highway Safety data. GA-400 through Alpharetta has experienced multiple documented multi-vehicle crashes, including a collision near Windward and McFarland Parkways in September 2024 and a serious single-vehicle crash near Mansell Road in April 2025.

Speed, impairment, and distraction remain primary contributing factors in serious crashes throughout North Fulton County. During the 2025 Christmas holiday counting period alone, Georgia Department of Public Safety made 239 DUI arrests and issued 489 distracted driving citations, highlighting ongoing road safety challenges that affect local residents.

The four-attorney team at Horst Shewmaker LLC brings over 20 years of experience representing North Fulton County injury victims and has recovered more than 30 million dollars in damages for clients. As an Alpharetta personal injury lawyer firm recognized as Best of Georgia 2025, the practice handles car accidents, truck accidents, motorcycle accidents, pedestrian accidents, brain injuries, spinal injuries, and wrongful death claims on a contingency fee basis with no upfront costs.

Horst Shewmaker LLC is a personal injury law firm serving accident victims in Alpharetta, North Fulton County, and throughout Georgia. Attorneys Michael W. Horst, Zachary S. Shewmaker, Jarrett L. Miller, and Valerie Jane Pallos have recovered more than 30 million dollars in damages for clients over more than 20 years of personal injury practice.

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For more information about Horst Shewmaker, LLC, contact the company here:Horst Shewmaker, LLCZachary S. Shewmaker6785627714info@horstshewmaker.com10745 Westside Way Suite 165, Alpharetta, GA 30009

Horst Shewmaker, LLC

Horst Shewmaker, LLC is a highly specialized personal injury law firm based in Alpharetta, Georgia, serving clients throughout the state. Horst Shewmaker is dedicated to providing personalized and empathetic legal representation.

Website: https://horstshewmaker.com/

Email: info@horstshewmaker.com

Phone: 6785627714