

SERVICES

Automotive Industry Team

We're THE Automotive Supplier's Law Firm.

Butzel's clients rely on our global Automotive Industry Team for virtually every type of legal service required by automotive suppliers. We're proud that Butzel is widely recognized across the automotive industry as the supplier's firm and that's because we won't represent OEMs adverse to a supplier. What differentiates us from many of our competitors is that we've served a portfolio of thousands of automotive supplier clients—experience which informs our overall competitive advantage. Our attorneys are accustomed to providing no holds barred advice to suppliers. They are veterans of the industry and represent the entire supplier community—from global Tier 1 suppliers to Tier 2 and 3 suppliers locally, nationally, and worldwide.

Butzel has always been headquartered in Detroit. Throughout our over 170-year history, our attorneys have counseled the industry leaders that transformed Michigan from the home of the Motor City into the epicenter of the global automotive industry it is today. Our work involves important matters across the world—in North America, Europe, Latin America, and Asia. With offices located throughout Michigan, in Washington, DC, and with global alliance offices throughout the world through our affiliation with Lex Mundi, our clients know they can depend on the depth and breadth of our firm to navigate nearly every type of legal service an automotive supplier requires—whether pertinent to day-to-day operational matters or global issues affecting the entire industry.

We're proud to be one of the first firms in the US to form a Connected and Autonomous Mobility Team. And when it comes to managing risk for our clients in automotive safety, compliance, product liability, and recall and warranty matters, our attorneys comprise one of the most sophisticated and experienced teams in the nation. We understand the challenges presented in managing critical supply chain relationships and accordingly, we stay ahead of ever-changing industry standards that affect the day-to-day business of our clients. Our

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lawyers study the rapid changes and developments in the automotive industry every day so that they can provide advice and guidance based on up-to-the-minute industry data.

In addition to the legal acumen our clients can depend on, they also benefit from the counsel of attorneys that have multifaceted industry experience. Several Butzel attorneys have degrees in engineering, technology, and other areas pertinent to the automotive industry in addition to their law degrees. Before joining Butzel, these attorneys were employed at OEMs, Tier 1, 2, and 3 suppliers, and other entities associated with the sector.

Since the inception of the industry in the early part of the 20th century, we've been honored that our attorneys have played an integral part in advising automotive leaders. We've had a presence for decades and continue to be a leading force today, shaping how the industry's disputes are resolved and transactions are accomplished. From our origins in the mid-1800s representing entities in the Great Lakes and international shipping trades, we've evolved to partnering with today's manufacturing innovators. We continue to be profoundly involved in restructuring the automotive industry, including its most significant acquisitions and divestitures, workouts and bankruptcies, technological developments, and general commercial transactions.

We are delighted to be recognized among the nation's premier law firms within the American automotive industry. Our firm and our attorneys have been acknowledged year-after-year by a variety of top legal industry publications, regionally and nationally, in numerous practice areas that encompass our global Automotive practice. Dozens of the firm's attorneys are exclusively dedicated to providing consultation and representation in automotive matters. The Automotive Industry Team is comprised of seasoned veterans, each recognized as a front-running professional in their field. Our attorneys study, analyze, and frequently write about and speak on the automotive sector. Consequently, their viewpoints are regularly sought by the national and international media that cover the automotive industry.

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Our clients can rely on us to remain innovative, and we've done just that. We're constantly adapting to meet the needs of our clients and the demands inherent to this ever-evolving industry. We are recognized nationally for our experience and offer legal representation and counseling in a variety of segments pertinent to the automotive industry.

Supply Chain Management

Managing critical supply chain relationships is challenging—we understand that suppliers are constantly faced with the demands inherent to operating as systems integrators and embracing flexible and lean manufacturing concepts. At Butzel, our lawyers study the rapid changes and developments in the automotive industry every day so that they can provide advice and guidance based on up-to-the-minute industry data. We relentlessly focus on improving efficiencies and remaining abreast of ever-changing industry standards that affect the routine business of our clients. Our clients benefit from advisors who understand their industry, help shape the legal and regulatory environment within which they operate, and who are accustomed to quickly assembling an experienced cross-disciplinary team that will develop workable strategies to achieve demonstrable results all in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

Terms and Conditions

Counseling our clients year-after-year pertinent to purchasing and sales terms and conditions has led to our attorneys building an enviable level of experience. Butzel is proud to be an active member of MEMA, for more than 20 years now. We strongly align with MEMA's core values—particularly in our mutual desire to advance the vehicle supplier industry. Members of this group serve as the principal editor and as the co-author of the *MEMA OE Suppliers OEM Light Vehicle North American Production Purchase Order Contract Terms and Conditions Comparative Analysis*, the standard industry reference that our firm has prepared since 2008. They also serve as legal counsel to MEMA OE Councils including the Chief Purchasing Council and the Heavy Duty Advanced Technology Council, and as a co-drafter of the North American Die Casting Association's (NADCA) Model Terms and Conditions.

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Environmental, Sustainability and Governance

Determining which Environmental, Sustainability and Governance (ESG) regulations are in place at the local, state, national, and global level can be daunting. As a large firm, we're able to lean on the experience of attorneys from each of our office locations to analyze processes and systems to identify and manage growth opportunities. We offer counsel to mitigate the risks that are often realized when entities are in a growth phase or are navigating the impact their organization has on the world, their customers, staff, and communities. We understand that sustainability is a particular focus for suppliers when it comes to environmental matters and we're prepared to help entities of all sizes from small businesses to major corporations. We offer experience on matters including development issues, such as obtaining wetlands and sewer construction permits, to regulatory matters, including compliance with permits and emission limits. Our practice includes state and federal regulatory compliance permitting for water discharge and air emissions, brownfield cost recovery, control of toxic substances such as pesticides, PCBs, and asbestos, mold, and other indoor air issues, spill reporting requirements, labeling and marketing of consumer chemical products, management of underground storage tanks, insurance coverage for environmental claims, environmental aspects of real estate and business acquisitions, environmental litigation, counsel on tax incentives, and commentary on proposed rules and legislation. Butzel attorneys have been involved in many Superfund cases, have extensive experience with environmental litigation, and have significant know-how in the development and production of natural resources.

Product Liability/Recall & Warranty

We advise clients on risk management, prosecution and defense of complex commercial litigation, and other matters involving product liability and recall and warranty. We have experience developing risk identification and mitigation programs and developing systems for monitoring compliance with Tread Recall Enhancement, Accountability and Documentation (TREAD) Act reporting, and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) regulations. We have performed national defense counsel work for suppliers of

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sophisticated automotive components including anti-lock brake systems, rollover protection systems, tires, and an array of safety components. Clients benefit from our cost-effective representation through active litigation management and prudent use of information technology to control the scope and cost of discovery.

Real Estate

Real estate developments and transactions continue to grow in variety and complexity and often require the creation of sophisticated financial instruments and leases. Transactions can include navigating intricate zoning, condemnation, and tax issues, mineral rights concerns, environmental assessments, and permitting requirements. The attorneys in our real estate practice work hand-in-hand with our automotive attorneys in areas that include acquisition and disposition, condemnation/ eminent domain, land development, leasing, lending, property taxes, litigation, title insurance, and other real estate needs pertinent to our supplier clients.

Labor and Employment

The Labor and Employment group at Butzel is accustomed to providing counsel to our supplier clients in traditional labor matters, such as collective bargaining, representational campaigns and elections, unfair labor practice charges, strikes including injunction proceedings in state and federal courts designed to end unlawful strikes or picketing, wage and hour matters, and arbitrations. We represent our supplier clients in all aspects of labor and employment issues, including litigation, administrative agency charges, benefits, non-competes, counseling, advising, and training.

Immigration

Whether doing business in the US or abroad, our supplier clients receive exceptional representation and personalized attention from our attorneys when immigration issues arise. Clients of all sizes and individuals and families throughout the country and around the world benefit from the relationships our attorneys have established with members of the local and international immigration communities. Our services include counsel pertinent to citizenship, permanent residence, employer

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Areas of Concentration

Connected Car and
Autonomous Vehicles

Product Liability/Recall &
Warranty

Supply Chain Management

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compliance, Green Cards, temporary visas, and more.

Connected Cars and Autonomous Vehicles

We're one of the first firms in the US to form a Connected and Autonomous Mobility Team. Our attorneys are immersed in the legal issues and challenges presented by the many new technologies gaining traction in the automotive industry, including autonomous driving, connectivity, electrification, and shared mobility. Our experience includes advising clients on matters such as adapting to current and future safety standards and regulations, responding to potential safety defects, recalls and noncompliance, especially in the areas of software, hardware, and emerging technology, and recognizing and mitigating legal risk due to potential cybersecurity threats and vulnerabilities.

Advanced Battery Technologies

Butzel attorneys have been renowned—since before the advent of the first US internal combustion engines (ICEs)—for staying ahead of the curve pertaining to advances in technology. Our attorneys are particularly adept at guiding entities through the maze of governmental mandates and regulations imposed in the areas of advanced battery manufacturing and storage, including approved methods for recycling and disposal for hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs), battery electric vehicles (BEVs), plug-in electric vehicles (PHEVs), and others, including charging infrastructure and additional emerging technologies in the electric and autonomous vehicle (E/AV) sector. We help clients to develop an evergreen business model so that they can seamlessly pivot and expand their footprint in the market as technological advances in the industry occur. We understand that for many of our clients—throughout the US and across the world—supply chain sustainability is always top of mind. Butzel's Automotive Team is experienced in assisting clients to adapt and diversify. We're proud to be an active member of NAATBatt International and to be deeply immersed in this ever-expanding segment of the automotive industry.

Compliance and Regulations

When compliance is at stake, comprehensive experience is a must. Butzel has significant experience in the automotive industry, including design engineers, program managers, testing engineers and quality and manufacturing leaders. Butzel is uniquely positioned to assist in an audit and review of compliance with regulations and industry standards across a tiered manufacturer's supply chain.

Butzel's Automotive Terms & Conditions Resource Center