

SOUTHFIELD, Mich., Sept. 20, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Leading Michigan Accident Attorney Joumana Kayrouz endorsed legislation that protects accident victims from lawyers engaged in "ambulance chasing" and urged the Michigan Legislature to adopt it as law.

Kayrouz said that reputable law firms like her own legitimately advertise and publicize their services pursuant to the strict advertising rules imposed by the State Bar of Michigan and the Michigan Professional Rules of Ethics (MPRE). She said she responds to inquiries from potential clients who establish contact with the firm, and not the other way around.

Two proposed laws in the State Legislature would prevent the solicitation of injury victims at the scene of an accident, immediately after the accident, or during the 30 days after an injury is sustained.

"The legislation is important to protect the integrity of the legal profession and the rights of accident victims," Kayrouz said.

"The first thing an individual who sustains an injury should be thinking about is obtaining emergency assistance, and not be concerned with who should represent them."

Recognized as Michigan's leading Accident Attorney, Kayrouz called "ambulance chasing" an "unscrupulous and cheap practice" that is "an insult not only to the victims but to law firms like my own that adhere to ethical requirements regarding advertising defined by the MPRE."

Kayrouz said that "ambulance chasing" also involves unscrupulous individuals in other related professions such as in the medical field and also those who rush to the accident sites, such as tow trucks or collision companies.

"When lawyers hide behind doctors and other accident professionals who directly solicit clients, they are shortcutting the system," Kayrouz said.

"And when attorneys shortcut the system directly or indirectly, it is an insult to lawyers like me who invest so much in advertising to do the right thing according to the State Bar of Michigan. As you can see, there are so many unethical ways, direct and not so direct, by which lawyers can solicit business and this needs to stop. Most importantly, however, it is very unethical to solicit clients immediately after a dramatic life event has taken place when they are at their most vulnerable state. That's why I support this legislation."

Unscrupulous lawyers are, simply put, exploiting the client, Kayrouz said, noting that having time to weigh the challenges they face allows accident victims to make better judgments.

"The more time they give themselves from the date of the accident, the better the public can make sound decisions and take sound actions," Kayrouz said.

Kayrouz said that she is sending letters to each member of the Michigan Legislature, including the sponsors of the two bills (HB 4770 and HB 4771) to encourage them to approve the legislation and to give it "teeth so enforcement can be aggressive and effective."

State Rep. Ellen Cogen Lipton of Huntington Woods sponsored HB 4770 and State Rep. Joseph Graves of Genesee and Oakland Counties sponsored HB 4771.

HB 4770 details the time period and circumstances by which victims may be contacted either directly or indirectly.

HB 4771 bans any law firm, lawyer or individual on behalf of an attorney from making direct contact with injured victims, their relatives or friends from providing legal services during the 30-days following an accident.

Knowingly violating the above prohibition would be a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than two years and/or a fine of not more than \$15,000.

Kayrouz praised Representatives Lipton and Graves, and the House members who also co-sponsored both bills including Rep. Kevin Cotter, Bruce R. Rendon, Wayne A. Schmidt, Marcia Hovey-Wright

,
Dian Slavens
,
David Knezek
and
Stacy Erwin Oakes
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For more information on the legislation or on the legal services of the Law Offices of Joumana Kayrouz PLLC, visit www.JoumanaKayrouz.com .

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