

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Ramon Canales v. Webasto Thermo and Comfort North America,
Inc., et al.

Canales v. Webasto · No. 2:25-cv-04504-HDV-JC · Decided August 6, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California denied Plaintiff Ramon Canales’s motion to remand and motion to strike in an employment discrimination action removed from state court. The court held that complete diversity existed because Plaintiff was a California citizen and the defendants were Michigan citizens, and that the amount in controversy exceeded \$75,000 based on lost wages and employment benefits.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Hernán D. Vera
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	August 6, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-04504-HDV-JC
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved to remand an employment-discrimination action removed from Los Angeles Superior Court on the ground that diversity jurisdiction was not established. Plaintiff also moved to strike evidence submitted in opposition to remand.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The removing party bears the burden of establishing federal jurisdiction. When the amount in controversy is challenged, the court determines by a preponderance of the evidence whether the jurisdictional threshold is satisfied, considering summary-judgment-type evidence. Removal statutes are strictly construed, with a strong presumption against removal jurisdiction.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished, nonprecedential district-court order
PARTIES	Ramon Canales v. Webasto Thermo and Comfort North America, Inc., Valerie McKeachie, Jim Cowen

TOPICS

subject matter jurisdiction

civil procedure

employment discrimination

wrongful termination

evidence

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

employment law

employment discrimination

civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether complete diversity existed between Plaintiff, a California citizen, and Defendants, Michigan citizens, for purposes of diversity jurisdiction and removal.
2. Whether Defendants established by a preponderance of the evidence that the amount in controversy exceeded \$75,000.
3. Whether Plaintiff's motion to strike evidence submitted in opposition to remand should be granted.
4. Whether Plaintiff was entitled to attorney's fees and costs incurred in seeking remand.

HOLDINGS

1. Complete diversity existed because Plaintiff was a citizen of California, the individual defendants were citizens of Michigan, and Webasto was a citizen of Michigan based on its incorporation and principal place of business there.
2. Defendants established by a preponderance of the evidence that the amount in controversy exceeded \$75,000.
3. The motion to strike was denied as moot because the court did not rely on the challenged evidence beyond the evidence sufficient to establish jurisdiction.
4. Plaintiff's request for fees and costs associated with remand was denied, and Defendants' request for sanctions and fees concerning the motion to strike was declined at that juncture.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A defendant may remove an action to federal court based on diversity jurisdiction if “the citizenship of each plaintiff is diverse from the citizenship of each defendant,” and “no defendant ‘is a citizen of the State in which such action is brought.’” (III.A)

“Where . . . it is unclear or ambiguous from the face of a state-court complaint whether the requisite amount in controversy is pled, the removing defendant bears the burden of establishing, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the amount in controversy exceeds the jurisdictional threshold.” (III.B)

“Because the Court finds that the Defendants have provided sufficient proof that Plaintiff’s lost income alone exceeds the jurisdictional threshold, it need not address these additional components of the amount in controversy.” (III.B)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that Webasto terminated him in May 2024 after 26 years of employment and that he experienced age discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and related employment-law violations. He sought lost wages and employment benefits, emotional-distress damages, punitive damages, attorney's fees, and costs. Defendants submitted declarations and payroll records showing that Webasto was incorporated and headquartered in Michigan, the individual defendants were Michigan citizens, and Plaintiff's compensation exceeded or, based on lost wages over more than a year, surpassed the \$75,000 jurisdictional threshold.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Canales filed the action in Los Angeles Superior Court on April 1, 2025. Webasto removed the action to the Central District of California on May 19, 2025, and the individual defendants consented to removal. The district court heard oral argument on July 31, 2025, denied the motion to remand, denied the motion to strike as moot, and denied the request for fees and costs associated with remand.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Prize Frize, Inc. v. Matrix, Inc., 167 F.3d 1261, 1265 (9th Cir. 1999)
- Gaus v. Miles, Inc., 980 F.2d 564, 566 (9th Cir. 1992)
- Shamrock Oil & Gas Corp. v. Sheets, 313 U.S. 100, 108-09 (1941)
- Caterpillar Inc. v. Lewis, 519 U.S. 61, 68 (1996)
- Kanter v. Warner-Lambert Co., 265 F.3d 853, 857 (9th Cir. 2001)
- Hertz Corp. v. Friend, 559 U.S. 77, 92-93 (2010)
- Fritsch v. Swift Transportation Co. of Arizona, LLC, 899 F.3d 785, 793, 795 (9th Cir. 2018)
- Lewis v. Verizon Communications Inc., 627 F.3d 395, 400 (9th Cir. 2010)
- Campbell v. Vitran Express, Inc., 471 F. App'x 646, 648 (9th Cir. 2012)
- Dart Cherokee Basin Operating Co. v. Owens, 574 U.S. 81, 82, 89 (2014)
- Chavez v. JPMorgan Chase & Co., 888 F.3d 413, 418 (9th Cir. 2018)
- Ibarra v. Manheim Investments, Inc., 775 F.3d 1193, 1197