

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Joel Villanueva, Jr. v. General Motors LLC, et al.

Joel Villanueva, Jr. v. General Motors LLC, No. 8:25-cv-02047-DFM (C.D. Cal. Nov. 5, 2025) · No. 8:25-cv-02047-DFM · Decided November 5, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California denied Joel Villanueva, Jr.’s motion to remand his Song-Beverly Consumer Warranty Act and Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act action against General Motors LLC. The court held that the complaint was indeterminate as to the amount in controversy, so General Motors’ removal deadline was not triggered by the initial pleading. The court also found that General Motors plausibly established diversity jurisdiction and an amount in controversy exceeding \$75,000.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Douglas F. McCormick
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	November 5, 2025
DOCKET	8:25-cv-02047-DFM
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved to remand a removed California Song-Beverly Consumer Warranty Act and Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act action to state court, arguing that removal was untimely and that General Motors had not established the amount in controversy required for federal jurisdiction.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Removal statutes are strictly construed against removal jurisdiction; the removing defendant bears the burden of establishing that removal is proper, with doubts resolved against removability. A notice of removal based on diversity jurisdiction need only plausibly allege that the amount in controversy exceeds the jurisdictional threshold unless the plaintiff contests or the court questions that allegation, in which case supporting evidence is required.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential district court order; precedential status is unknown in the provided metadata.
PARTIES	Joel Villanueva, Jr. v. General Motors LLC, et al.

TOPICS

subject matter jurisdiction civil procedure consumer protection remedies

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure removal and remand consumer warranty law federal jurisdiction

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint triggered the first thirty-day removal period under 28 U.S.C. § 1446(b) because removability was ascertainable from the face of the pleading.
2. Whether the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act claim independently supplied a basis for federal-question removal despite the complaint's indeterminate amount in controversy.
3. Whether General Motors plausibly alleged and, after challenge, sufficiently established complete diversity and an amount in controversy exceeding \$75,000.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint did not trigger the first thirty-day removal period because it was indeterminate as to the amount in controversy; therefore, General Motors's notice of removal was timely.
2. The Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act claim did not independently provide grounds for federal-question removal because the complaint did not sufficiently allege that the amount in controversy met the Act's \$50,000 jurisdictional requirement.
3. General Motors plausibly alleged complete diversity and an amount in controversy exceeding \$75,000, and it submitted sufficient evidence to establish the amount in controversy after Villanueva challenged the jurisdictional allegations.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A defendant seeking removal has the burden to establish that removal is proper and any doubt is resolved against removability.” (at 2)

“The first thirty-day removal period is triggered if the case stated by the initial pleading is removable on its face.” (at 3)

“a defendant’s notice of removal need include only a plausible allegation that the amount in controversy exceeds the jurisdictional threshold; the notice need not contain evidentiary submissions.” (at 5)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Villanueva filed claims concerning a motor vehicle under California's Song-Beverly Consumer Warranty Act and the federal Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act. The complaint sought actual damages, restitution, a civil penalty, consequential and incidental damages, attorney fees, costs, prejudgment interest, and other relief, but did not specify the total amount in controversy. General Motors's notice of removal estimated the vehicle's purchase price at \$119,672.56, deductions at \$1,228.35, actual damages at \$118,444.21, and additional amounts for civil penalties and attorney fees.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Villanueva filed the action in Los Angeles County Superior Court on April 7, 2025. General Motors was served on April 11, 2025, filed an answer in state court on July 1, 2025, and removed the action on September 10, 2025, invoking diversity jurisdiction. The federal district court denied Villanueva's motion to remand.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Gunn v. Minton*, 568 U.S. 251, 256 (2013)
- *City of Chi. v. Int'l Coll. of Surgeons*, 522 U.S. 156, 163 (1997)
- *Harris v. Bankers Life & Cas. Co.*, 425 F.3d 689, 695, 697-698 (9th Cir. 2005)
- *Luther v. Countrywide Home Loans Servicing, LP*, 533 F.3d 1031, 1034 (9th Cir. 2008)
- *Kuxhausen v. BMW Fin. Servs. NA LLC*, 707 F.3d 1136, 1139 (9th Cir. 2013)
- *Guerrero v. Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC*, No. 23-0242, 2023 WL 4085975, at *1 (C.D. Cal. June 20, 2023)
- *Torres v. General Motors LLC*, No. 25-6820, 2025 WL 2848989, at *3 (C.D. Cal. Oct. 7, 2025)
- *Martinez v. General Motors LLC*, No. 25-7208, 2025 WL 2926885, at *5 (C.D. Cal. Oct. 15, 2025)
- *Longoria v. Ford Motor Co.*, No. 22-7560, 2022 WL 16961482, at *3 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 16, 2022)
- *Dart Cherokee Basin Operating Co., LLC v. Owens*, 574 U.S. 81, 89 (2014)