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From the San Antonio Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/sanantonio/news/2021/04/23/sa-attorney-wins-32m-verdict-for-oil-gas-client.html>

# SA lawyer wins \$32M verdict in business brawl

**The verdict may end up being one of the largest in Texas this year**

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A San Antonio-area man won what may be one of the largest jury verdicts in Texas this week when he was awarded \$32 million in a breach-of-contract lawsuit against a business partner he claims tried to violently remove him from the company's premises.

A Montgomery County jury handed down a decision on April 20 in favor of Garrett Gagliano, a Kendall County man who makes control panels for oil and gas pipelines.

The Montgomery County jury found that a business partner of Gagliano's, Lee Burkett, violated an agreement he had with Gagliano to run a separate company called L&S Pro-Line LLC, which manufactures the metal skids on which the control panels are mounted.

Corey Wehmeyer, the San Antonio lawyer who represents Gagliano, said via email



COMSTOCK

A Kendall County businessman said he was nearly assaulted by a business partner who was found in breach of contract by a Texas jury on Tuesday.

that the jury's verdict may be one of the biggest jury verdicts in Texas this year. The largest jury verdict in Texas last year was just under \$34 million, [according to Texas Lawyer](#).

In 2016, Gagliano bought a 25% interest in Proline and agreed to be the company's chief financial officer.

Gagliano claims that over the next two years he learned about alleged shady business practices being conducted by Burkett in Proline's Montgomery County office. Among other things, the lawsuit alleges that Burkett bribed potential customers, committed illegal employment practices and hired a registered sex offender who masturbated in view of women working at a veterinarian clinic next door.

Gagliano said that when he tried to enter the Proline office in August 2018 "to investigate the nature and extent of the business actually being carried out ... in his absence," Burkett attempted to assault him.

"When Gagliano attempted to enter the office, defendant Burkett made threatening physical contact with Gagliano to prevent him from doing so, and other Proline employees had to pull defendant Burkett away from Gagliano," according to the lawsuit. Gagliano said he never returned to the office after that in order to avoid the risk of physical confrontation.

Gagliano also accused Burkett of working with competitors who built control panels instead of giving Gagliano's company, Tactical Automation Inc., first chance at such work as had been promised in the contract he signed in 2016.

The jury agreed that Burkett breached his contract with Gagliano and his duty to Proline and ordered him to pay \$32 million, which includes about \$1.6 million that will go to Gagliano's attorneys.

Burkett's attorney, [William Helfand](#), didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

**Jessica Corso**

Reporter

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