

A small technology company in Washington State, USA, have filed a federal lawsuit against Ford. Eagle Harbor Holdings say they developed the technology behind the Ford Sync system and that Ford infringed on seven patents for the technology behind Sync and other safety technologies such as Active Park Assist, Blind-Spot Identification System with Cross Traffic Alert, Integrated Control System for Stability Control, and MyKey.

Jeffery Harmes, an attorney for Eagle Harbor, said in a statement that representatives of the company began meeting with Ford in 2002 to discuss using the technology in vehicles. Harmes added that Ford broke off communications with Eagle Harbor in 2008.



Sync, which lets users operate certain vehicle functions via voice controls and wireless connectivity, has been available since 2007. It has been installed in nearly 4 million Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles. Ford say about 80% of buyers opt for the feature. But Sync has drawn scrutiny from federal safety regulators who are exploring driver distraction. An updated version of Sync, MyFord Touch, has drawn negative reviews from Consumer Reports for its complexity. It was also a leading factor behind Ford's drop in the J.D. Power Initial Quality Study.