

Old Lessons May Haunt Baltimore Bridge Tragedy

March 27, 2024

Member **José Cot** spoke to *The Maritime Executive* for an article that published March 27, 2024 in the wake of the Francis Scott Key bridge accident. José provided commentary on potential safety and liability arguments that might arise and implications for the maritime industry overall in light of the allision.

If the Key Bridge incident ends up in court – as it almost certainly will – the degree of protection around the bridge pier could come up, says José R. Cot, an experienced maritime litigation and insurance attorney at McGlinchey Stafford. Admiralty law presumes that the moving vessel is at fault in an allision, but this can be contested, and the shipowner could argue that the damage would not have been as serious if the pier had had better protection.

“Yes, it could be raised,” Cot says. “There has been a historical interest in making fender systems a lot more robust, such that if you have these types of allisions – which are bound to happen – that they do not damage the bridge structure itself. I do think that those representing the vessel interest would probably raise that.”

To review the full article, click [here](#).

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José R. Cot