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Attorneys for Plaintiff
ANTHONY E. HELD, PH.D., P.E.

ENDORSED
FILED
Superior Court of California
County of San Francisco

JUL 17 2015

CLERK OF THE COURT
BY: VICTORIA GONZALEZ
Deputy Clerk

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
UNLIMITED CIVIL JURISDICTION

ANTHONY E. HELD, PH.D., P.E.,
Plaintiff,
v.
THE NEIMAN MARCUS GROUP LLC; and
DOES 1 through 30, inclusive,
Defendants

Case No. **CGC 15-546937**
**COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES
AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**
(Health & Safety Code § 25249.5 *et seq.*)

1 NATURE OF THE ACTION

2 1. This Complaint is a representative action brought by plaintiff ANTHONY E.
3 HELD, PH.D., P.E. in the public interest of the citizens of the State of California to enforce the
4 People’s right to be informed of the health hazards caused by exposures to di(2-
5 ethylhexyl)phthalate (“DEHP”), a toxic chemical found in the vinyl/PVC cords of earmuffs sold
6 by defendants in California.

7 2. By this Complaint, plaintiff seeks to remedy defendants’ continuing failure to
8 warn California citizens and other individuals about the risks of exposure to DEHP present in
9 and on the vinyl/PVC cords of earmuffs manufactured, distributed, and offered for sale or use to
10 consumers and other individuals throughout the State of California.

11 3. Detectable levels of DEHP are found in and on the vinyl/PVC cords of earmuffs
12 that defendants manufacture, distribute, and offer for sale to consumers and other individuals
13 throughout the State of California.

14 4. Under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, codified at
15 Health and Safety Code section 25249.6 *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”), “[n]o person in the course of
16 doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to
17 the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable
18 warning to such individual . . .” Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.

19 5. Pursuant to Proposition 65, on October 24, 2003, California identified and listed
20 DEHP as a chemical known to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. DEHP became
21 subject to the “clear and reasonable warning” requirements of the act one year later on October
22 24, 2004. Cal. Code Regs. tit. 27, § 27001(c); Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.8 &
23 25249.10(b).

24 6. Defendants manufacture, distribute, import, sell, and offer for sale without health
25 hazard warnings in California, earmuffs with vinyl/PVC cords containing DEHP including, but
26 not exclusively, the *Neiman Marcus Wired Earmuff, Style# YD001-NMEM, #737-30-5295-*
27 *00006-0, #810383021215* (hereinafter “PRODUCTS”).
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1 one or more instances of wrongful conduct occurred, and continue to occur, in this county,
2 and/or because DEFENDANTS conducted, and continue to conduct, business in San Francisco
3 with respect to the PRODUCTS.

4 22. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to
5 California Constitution Article VI, section 10, which grants the Superior Court “original
6 jurisdiction in all causes except those given by statute to other trial courts.” The statute under
7 which this action is brought does not specify any other basis of subject matter jurisdiction.

8 23. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over DEFENDANTS based on
9 plaintiff’s information and good faith belief that each defendant is a person, firm, corporation or
10 association that is a citizen of the State of California, has sufficient minimum contacts in the
11 State of California, and/or otherwise purposefully avails itself of the California market.
12 DEFENDANTS’ purposeful availment renders the exercise of personal jurisdiction by
13 California courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

14 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

15 **(Violation of Proposition 65 - Against All Defendants)**

16 24. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein,
17 Paragraphs 1 through 23, inclusive.

18 25. In enacting Proposition 65, in the preamble to the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic
19 Enforcement Act of 1986, the People of California expressly declared their right “[t]o be
20 informed about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive
21 harm.”

22 26. Proposition 65 states, “[n]o person in the course of doing business shall
23 knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause
24 cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such
25 individual . . .” Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.

26 27. On April 29, 2015, plaintiff served a sixty-day notice of violation, together with
27 the requisite certificate of merit, on NEIMAN and certain public enforcement agencies alleging
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1 that, as a result of DEFENDANTS' sales of the PRODUCTS containing DEHP, purchasers and
2 users in the State of California were being exposed to DEHP resulting from their reasonably
3 foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS, without the individual purchasers and users first having
4 been provided with a "clear and reasonable warning" regarding the harms associated with such
5 exposures, as required by Proposition 65.

6 28. DEFENDANTS manufacture, import, distribute, sell, and offer the PRODUCTS
7 for sale or use in violation of Health and Safety Code section 25249.6, and DEFENDANTS'
8 violations have continued beyond their receipt of plaintiff's sixty-day notice of violation.
9 DEFENDANTS' violations are ongoing and continuous in nature and, as such, will continue in
10 the future.

11 29. After receiving plaintiff's sixty-day notice of violation, none of the appropriate
12 public enforcement agencies have commenced and diligently prosecuted a cause of action
13 against DEFENDANTS under Proposition 65 to enforce the alleged violations that are the
14 subject of plaintiff's notice of violation.

15 30. The PRODUCTS that DEFENDANTS manufacture, import, distribute, sell, and
16 offer for sale or use in California cause exposures to DEHP as a result of the reasonably
17 foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS. Such exposures caused by DEFENDANTS and endured by
18 consumers and other individuals in California are not exempt from the "clear and reasonable"
19 warning requirements of Proposition 65, yet DEFENDANTS provide no warning.

20 31. DEFENDANTS know or should know that the PRODUCTS they manufacture,
21 import, distribute, sell, and offer for sale or use in California contain DEHP.

22 32. DEHP is present in or on the PRODUCTS in such a way as to expose individuals
23 through dermal contact and/or ingestion during reasonably foreseeable use.

24 33. The normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS has caused, and
25 continues to cause, consumer exposures to DEHP, as defined by title 27 of the California Code
26 of Regulations, section 25602(b).

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1 offering the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California without first providing a “clear and
2 reasonable warning” in accordance with title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, section
3 25601 *et seq.*, regarding the harms associated with exposures to DEHP;

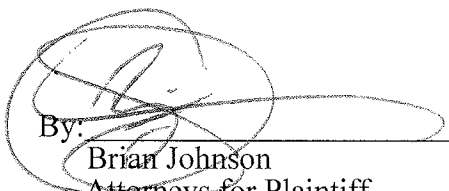
4 3. That the Court, Pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(a), issue
5 preliminary and permanent injunctions mandating that DEFENDANTS recall all PRODUCTS
6 currently in the chain of commerce in California without a “clear and reasonable warning” as
7 defined by California Code of Regulations title 27, section 25601 *et seq.*;

8 4. That the Court grant plaintiff his reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs of suit; and

9 5. That the Court grant such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

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11 Dated: July 14, 2015

Respectfully Submitted,
THE CHANLER GROUP

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14 By: 
15 Brian Johnson
16 Attorneys for Plaintiff
17 ANTHONY E. HELD, PH.D., P.E.
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