Assigned for all purposes to: Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Judicial Officer: Elaine Lu

Reuben Yeroushalmi (SBN 193981) 1 Peter T. Sato (SBN 238486) Tiffine E. Malamphy (SBN 312239) 2 Shannon E. Royster (SBN 314126) 3 YEROUSHALMI & YEROUSHALMI An Association of Independent Law Corporations 4 9100 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 240W Beverly Hills, California 90212 5 Telephone: (310) 623-1926 6 Facsimile: (310) 623-1930 7 Attorneys for Plaintiff, Consumer Advocacy Group, Inc. 8 9 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA 10 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES** 11 CASE NO. 19STCV29845 CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC., 12 in the public interest, 13 Plaintiff, COMPLAINT FOR PENALTY AND 14 INJUNCTION 15 T.J. MAXX, a business entity form unknown; Violation of Proposition 65, the Safe THE TJX COMPANIES, INC., a Delaware Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement 16 Corporation: Act of 1986 (Health & Safety Code, § 17 THE TJX OPERATING COMPANIES, 25249.5, et seg.) INC., a Delaware Corporation; 18 TJ MAXX OF CA, LLC, a Delaware Limited ACTION IS AN UNLIMITED CIVIL Liability Company; CASE (exceeds \$25,000) 19 MIWORLD ACCESSORIES, LLC, a New York Limited Liability Company; 20 and DOES 1-30; 21 Defendants. 22 23 Plaintiff CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. alleges causes of action against 24 defendants T.J. MAXX., THE TJX COMPANIES, INC., THE TJX OPERATING 25 COMPANIES, INC., TJ MAXX OF CA, LLC, MIWORLD, and DOES 1-30 as follows: 26 27 28

THE PARTIES

- 1. Plaintiff CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. ("Plaintiff" or "CAG") is an organization qualified to do business in the State of California. CAG is a person within the meaning of Health and Safety Code section 25249.11, subdivision (a). CAG, acting as a private attorney general, brings this action in the public interest as defined under Health and Safety Code section 25249.7, subdivision (d).
- 2. Defendant T.J. MAXX ("TJM") is a business entity form unknown doing business in the State of California at all relevant times herein.
- 3. Defendant THE TJX COMPANIES, INC. ("TJC") is a Delaware Corporation, qualified to do business in Delaware, and doing business in the State of California at all relevant times herein.
- 4. Defendant THE TJX OPERATING COMPANIES, INC. ("TJO") is a Delaware Corporation, qualified to do business in Delaware, and doing business in the State of California at all relevant times herein.
- 5. Defendant THE TJ MAXX OF CA, LLC ("TJMC") is a Delaware Limited Liability Company, qualified to do business in Delaware, and doing business in the State of California at all relevant times herein.
- Defendant MIWORLD ACCESSORIES, LLC ("MIWORLD") is a New York
 Corporation, qualified to do business in New York, and doing business in the State of
 California at all relevant times herein.
- 7. Plaintiff is presently unaware of the true names and capacities of defendants DOES 1-30, and therefore sues these defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will amend this complaint to allege their true names and capacities when ascertained. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that each fictitiously named defendant is responsible in some manner for the occurrences herein alleged and the damages caused thereby.

- 8. At all times mentioned herein, the term "Defendants" includes TJM, TJC, TJO, TJMC, MIWORLD, and DOES 1-30.
- 9. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges that each of the Defendants at all times mentioned herein have conducted business within the State of California.
- 10. Upon information and belief, at all times relevant to this action, each of the Defendants, including DOES 1-30, was an agent, servant, or employee of each of the other Defendants. In conducting the activities alleged in this Complaint, each of the Defendants was acting within the course and scope of this agency, service, or employment, and was acting with the consent, permission, and authorization of each of the other Defendants. All actions of each of the Defendants alleged in this Complaint were ratified and approved by every other Defendant or their officers or managing agents. Alternatively, each of the Defendants aided, conspired with and/or facilitated the alleged wrongful conduct of each of the other Defendants.
- 11. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that at all relevant times, each of the Defendants was a person doing business within the meaning of Health and Safety Code section 25249.11, subdivision (b), and that each of the Defendants had ten (10) or more employees at all relevant times.

JURISDICTION

- 12. The Court has jurisdiction over this lawsuit pursuant to California Constitution Article VI, Section 10, which grants the Superior Court original jurisdiction in all causes except those given by statute to other trial courts. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7, which allows enforcement of violations of Proposition 65 in any Court of competent jurisdiction.
- 13. This Court has jurisdiction over Defendants named herein because Defendants either reside or are located in this State or are foreign corporations authorized to do business in California, are registered with the California Secretary of State, or who do sufficient business in California, have sufficient minimum contacts with California, or otherwise

- intentionally avail themselves of the markets within California through their manufacture, distribution, promotion, marketing, or sale of their products within California to render the exercise of jurisdiction by the California courts permissible under traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.
- 14. Venue is proper in the County of Los Angeles because one or more of the instances of wrongful conduct occurred, and continues to occur, in the County of Los Angeles and/or because Defendants conducted, and continue to conduct, business in the County of Los Angeles with respect to the consumer product that is the subject of this action.

BACKGROUND AND PRELIMINARY FACTS

- 15. In 1986, California voters approved an initiative to address growing concerns about exposure to toxic chemicals and declared their right "[t]o be informed about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm." Ballot Pamp., Proposed Law, Gen. Elec. (Nov. 4, 1986) at p. 3. The initiative, The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, codified at Health and Safety Code sections 25249.5, et seq. ("Proposition 65"), helps to protect California's drinking water sources from contamination, to allow consumers to make informed choices about the products they buy, and to enable persons to protect themselves from toxic chemicals as they see fit.
- 16. Proposition 65 requires the Governor of California to publish a list of chemicals known to the state to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm. *Health & Safety Code* § 25249.8. The list, which the Governor updates at least once a year, contains over 700 chemicals and chemical families. Proposition 65 imposes warning requirements and other controls that apply to Proposition 65-listed chemicals.
- 17. All businesses with ten (10) or more employees that operate or sell products in California must comply with Proposition 65. Under Proposition 65, businesses are: (1) prohibited from knowingly discharging Proposition 65-listed chemicals into sources of drinking water (*Health & Safety Code* § 25249.5), and (2) required to provide "clear and

reasonable" warnings before exposing a person, knowingly and intentionally, to a Proposition 65-listed chemical (*Health & Safety Code* § 25249.6).

- 18. Proposition 65 provides that any person "violating or threatening to violate" the statute may be enjoined in any court of competent jurisdiction. *Health & Safety Code* § 25249.7. "Threaten to violate" means "to create a condition in which there is a substantial probability that a violation will occur." *Health & Safety Code* § 25249.11(e). Defendants are also liable for civil penalties of up to \$2,500.00 per day per violation, recoverable in a civil action. *Health & Safety Code* § 25249.7(b).
- 19. Plaintiff identified certain practices of manufacturers and distributors of DINP and DEHP-bearing products of exposing, knowingly and intentionally, persons in California to the Proposition 65-listed chemicals of such products without first providing clear and reasonable warnings of such to the exposed persons prior to the time of exposure. Plaintiff later discerned that Defendants engaged in such practice.
- 20. On January 1, 1988, the Governor of California added DEHP to the list of chemicals known to the State to cause cancer (*Cal. Code Regs.* tit. 27, § 27001(b)). Pursuant to Health and Safety Code sections 25249.9 and 25249.10, twenty (20) months after addition of DEHP to the list of chemicals known to the State to cause cancer, DEHP became fully subject to Proposition 65 warning requirements and discharge prohibitions.
- 21. On October 24, 2003, the Governor of California added DEHP to the list of chemicals known to the State to cause developmental and reproductive toxicity (*Cal. Code Regs.* tit. 27, § 27001(c)). Pursuant to Health and Safety Code sections 25249.9 and 25249.10, twenty (20) months after addition of DEHP to the list of chemicals known to the State to cause developmental and reproductive toxicity, DEHP became fully subject to Proposition 65 warning requirements and discharge prohibitions.
- 22. On December 20, 2013, the Governor of California added DINP to the list of chemicals known to the State to cause cancer (*Cal. Code Regs.* tit. 27, § 27001(b)). Pursuant to Health and Safety Code sections 25249.9 and 25249.10, twenty (20) months after

addition of DINP to the list of chemicals known to the State to cause cancer, DINP became fully subject to Proposition 65 warning requirements and discharge prohibitions.

SATISFACTION OF PRIOR NOTICE

- 23. On or about December 12, 2018, Plaintiff gave notice of alleged violations of Health and Safety Code section 25249.6, concerning consumer products exposures subject to a private action to TJM, TJO, MIWORLD, and to the California Attorney General, County District Attorneys, and City Attorneys for each city containing a population of at least 750,000 people in whose jurisdictions the violations allegedly occurred, concerning the product Travel Bottle Kit.
- 24. On or about December 21, 2018, Plaintiff gave notice of alleged violations of Health and Safety Code section 25249.6, concerning consumer products exposures subject to a private action to TJM, TJC, and to the California Attorney General, County District Attorneys, and City Attorneys for each city containing a population of at least 750,000 people in whose jurisdictions the violations allegedly occurred, concerning the product Umbrellas.
- 25. On or about February 4, 2019, Plaintiff gave notice of alleged violations of Health and Safety Code section 25249.6, concerning consumer products exposures subject to a private action to TJM, TJC, TJO, TJMC, MIWORLD, and to the California Attorney General, County District Attorneys, and City Attorneys for each city containing a population of at least 750,000 people in whose jurisdictions the violations allegedly occurred, concerning the product Travel Bottle Kit.
- 26. Before sending the notices of alleged violation, Plaintiff investigated the consumer products involved, the likelihood that such products would cause users to suffer significant exposures to DEHP and DINP, and the corporate structure of each of the Defendants.
- 27. Plaintiff's notice of alleged violation included a Certificate of Merit executed by the attorney for the noticing party, CAG. The Certificate of Merit stated that the attorney for

Plaintiff who executed the certificate had consulted with at least one person with relevant and appropriate expertise who reviewed data regarding the exposures to DEHP and DINP, the subject Proposition 65-listed chemical of this action. Based on that information, the attorney for Plaintiff who executed the Certificate of Merit believed there was a reasonable and meritorious case for this private action. The attorney for Plaintiff attached to the Certificate of Merit served on the Attorney General the confidential factual information sufficient to establish the basis of the Certificate of Merit.

- 28. Plaintiff's notices of alleged violations also included a Certificate of Service and a document entitled "The Safe Drinking Water & Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65) A Summary." *Health & Safety Code* § 25249.7(d).
- 29. Plaintiff is commencing this action more than sixty (60) days from the dates that Plaintiff gave notices of the alleged violations to TJM, TJC, TTJO, TJO, TJMC, and the public prosecutors referenced in Paragraphs 23-25.
- 30. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that neither the Attorney General, nor any applicable district attorney or city attorney has commenced and is diligently prosecuting an action against the Defendants.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(By CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. and against TJM, TJO, MIWORLD, and DOES 1-10 for Violations of Proposition 65, The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (*Health & Safety Code*, §§ 25249.5, et seq.))

Travel Accessories

- 31. Plaintiff CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. repeats and incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 30 of this complaint as though fully set forth herein.
- 32. Each of the Defendants is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a manufacturer, distributor, promoter, or retailer of Travel Bottle Kit, including but not limited to "Travel Bottle Kit 11 Piece Set"; "Isaac Mizrahi New York"; "Containers meet TSA air travel

- regulations"; "UPC 8 42100 12028 4"; "IMT-5746"; "Made in China" ("Travel Bottle Kit").
- 33. Travel Bottle Kit contains DEHP.
- 34. Defendants knew or should have known that DEHP has been identified by the State of California as a chemical known to cause cancer, reproductive toxicity, and developmental toxicity and therefore was subject to Proposition 65 warning requirements. Defendants were also informed of the presence of DEHP in Travel Bottle Kit within Plaintiff's notice of alleged violations further discussed above at Paragraph 23.
- 35. Plaintiff's allegations regarding Travel Bottle Kit concerns "[c]onsumer products exposure[s]," which "is an exposure that results from a person's acquisition, purchase, storage, consumption, or other reasonably foreseeable use of a consumer good, or any exposure that results from receiving a consumer service." *Cal. Code Regs.* tit. 27, § 25602(b). Travel Bottle Kit are consumer products, and, as mentioned herein, exposures to lead took place as a result of such normal and foreseeable use.
- 36. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that between December 12, 2015 and the present, each of the Defendants knowingly and intentionally exposed California consumers and users of Travel Bottle Kit, which Defendants manufactured, distributed, or sold as mentioned above, to DEHP, without first providing any type of clear and reasonable warning of such to the exposed persons before the time of exposure.

 Defendants have distributed and sold Travel Bottle Kit in California. Defendants know and intend that California consumers will use Travel Bottle Kit, thereby exposing them to DEHP. Defendants thereby violated Proposition 65.
- 37. The principal routes of exposure are through dermal contact. Persons sustain exposures by using, handling or carrying the Travel Bottle Kit without wearing gloves or by touching bare skin or mucous membranes with or without gloves after handling Travel Bottle Kit, as well as through direct and indirect hand to mouth contact, hand to mucous membrane, or breathing in particulate matter dispersed from Travel Bottle Kit during use,

- as well as through environmental mediums that carry the DEHP once contained within the Travel Bottle Kit.
- 38. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that each of Defendants' violations of Proposition 65 as to the Travel Bottle Kit have been ongoing and continuous, as Defendants engaged and continue to engage in conduct which violates Health and Safety Code section 25249.6, including the manufacture, distribution, promotion, and sale of Travel Bottle Kit, so that a separate and distinct violation of Proposition 65 occurred each and every time a person was exposed to DEHP by Travel Bottle Kit as mentioned herein.
- 39. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that each violation of Proposition 65 mentioned herein is ever continuing. Plaintiff further alleges and believes that the violations alleged herein will continue to occur into the future.
- 40. Based on the allegations herein, Defendants are liable for civil penalties of up to \$2,500.00 per day per individual exposure to DEHP from Travel Bottle Kit, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(b).
- 41. Plaintiff has engaged in good faith efforts to resolve the claims alleged herein prior to filing this Complaint.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(By CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. and against TJM, TJC, and DOES 11-20 for Violations of Proposition 65, The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Health & Safety Code, §§ 25249.5, et seq.))

Umbrellas

- 42. Plaintiff CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. repeats and incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 41 of this complaint as though fully set forth herein.
- 43. Each of the Defendants is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a manufacturer, distributor, promoter, or retailer of Umbrellas with Polymer Canopy, including but not limited to "Clear Plastic Umbrella with blue fabric seaming;" "Black handle with blue bead;" "VINRELLATM;" "Clear Bubble Wave;" "Item 500-A;" "UPC# 858459003604;"

- "Made In China;" "T.J. MAXX®;" "74-8425-686328-000999-08-2;" "98" ("Umbrellas").
- 44. Umbrellas contain DINP.
- 45. Defendants knew or should have known that DINP has been identified by the State of California as a chemical known to cause cancer and therefore was subject to Proposition 65 warning requirements. Defendants were also informed of the presence of DINP in Umbrellas within Plaintiff's notice of alleged violations further discussed above at Paragraph 24.
- 46. Plaintiff's allegations regarding Umbrellas concerns "[c]onsumer products exposure[s]," which "is an exposure that results from a person's acquisition, purchase, storage, consumption, or other reasonably foreseeable use of a consumer good, or any exposure that results from receiving a consumer service." *Cal. Code Regs.* tit. 27, § 25602(b). Umbrellas are consumer products, and, as mentioned herein, exposures to lead took place as a result of such normal and foreseeable use.
- 47. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that between December 21, 2015 and the present, each of the Defendants knowingly and intentionally exposed California consumers and users of Umbrellas, which Defendants manufactured, distributed, or sold as mentioned above, to DINP, without first providing any type of clear and reasonable warning of such to the exposed persons before the time of exposure. Defendants have distributed and sold Umbrellas in California. Defendants know and intend that California consumers will use Umbrellas, thereby exposing them to DINP. Defendants thereby violated Proposition 65.
- 48. The principal routes of exposure are through dermal contact. Persons sustain exposures by using, handling or carrying the Umbrellas without wearing gloves or by touching bare skin or mucous membranes with or without gloves after handling Umbrellas, as well as through direct and indirect hand to mouth contact, hand to mucous membrane, or

- breathing in particulate matter dispersed from Umbrellas during use, as well as through environmental mediums that carry the DINP once contained within the Umbrellas.
- 49. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that each of Defendants' violations of Proposition 65 as to the Umbrellas have been ongoing and continuous, as Defendants engaged and continue to engage in conduct which violates Health and Safety Code section 25249.6, including the manufacture, distribution, promotion, and sale of Umbrellas, so that a separate and distinct violation of Proposition 65 occurred each and every time a person was exposed to DINP by Umbrellas as mentioned herein.
- 50. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that each violation of Proposition 65 mentioned herein is ever continuing. Plaintiff further alleges and believes that the violations alleged herein will continue to occur into the future.
- 51. Based on the allegations herein, Defendants are liable for civil penalties of up to \$2,500.00 per day per individual exposure to DINP from Umbrellas, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(b).
- 52. Plaintiff has engaged in good faith efforts to resolve the claims alleged herein prior to filing this Complaint.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(By CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. and against TJM, TJO, TJC, TJCM, MIWORLD, and DOES 21-30 for Violations of Proposition 65, The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (*Health & Safety Code*, §§ 25249.5, et seq.))

Travel Accessories

- 53. Plaintiff CONSUMER ADVOCACY GROUP, INC. repeats and incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 52 of this complaint as though fully set forth herein.
- 54. Each of the Defendants is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a manufacturer, distributor, promoter, or retailer of Travel Pouch with Vinyl Components, including but not limited to "Travel Bottle Kit 11 Piece Set"; "Isaac Mizrahi New York"; "Containers

- meet TSA air travel regulations"; "UPC 8 42100 12028 4"; "IMT-5746"; "Made in China" ("Travel Bottle Kits").
- 55. Travel Bottle Kits contain DEHP.
- 56. Defendants knew or should have known that DEHP has been identified by the State of California as a chemical known to cause cancer, reproductive toxicity, and developmental toxicity and therefore was subject to Proposition 65 warning requirements. Defendants were also informed of the presence of DEHP in Travel Bottle Kits within Plaintiff's notice of alleged violations further discussed above at Paragraph 25.
- 57. Plaintiff's allegations regarding Travel Bottle Kits concerns "[c]onsumer products exposure[s]," which "is an exposure that results from a person's acquisition, purchase, storage, consumption, or other reasonably foreseeable use of a consumer good, or any exposure that results from receiving a consumer service." *Cal. Code Regs.* tit. 27, § 25602(b). Travel Bottle Kits are consumer products, and, as mentioned herein, exposures to lead took place as a result of such normal and foreseeable use.
- 58. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that between February 4, 2016 and the present, each of the Defendants knowingly and intentionally exposed California consumers and users of Travel Bottle Kits, which Defendants manufactured, distributed, or sold as mentioned above, to DEHP, without first providing any type of clear and reasonable warning of such to the exposed persons before the time of exposure.

 Defendants have distributed and sold Travel Bottle Kits in California. Defendants know and intend that California consumers will use Travel Bottle Kits, thereby exposing them to DEHP. Defendants thereby violated Proposition 65.
- 59. The principal routes of exposure are through dermal contact. Persons sustain exposures by using, handling or carrying the Travel Bottle Kits without wearing gloves or by touching bare skin or mucous membranes with or without gloves after handling Travel Bottle Kits, as well as through direct and indirect hand to mouth contact, hand to mucous membrane, or breathing in particulate matter dispersed from Travel Bottle Kits during

- use, as well as through environmental mediums that carry the DEHP once contained within the Travel Bottle Kits.
- 60. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that each of Defendants' violations of Proposition 65 as to the Travel Bottle Kits have been ongoing and continuous, as Defendants engaged and continue to engage in conduct which violates Health and Safety Code section 25249.6, including the manufacture, distribution, promotion, and sale of Travel Bottle Kits, so that a separate and distinct violation of Proposition 65 occurred each and every time a person was exposed to DEHP by Travel Bottle Kits as mentioned herein.
- 61. Plaintiff is informed, believes, and thereon alleges that each violation of Proposition 65 mentioned herein is ever continuing. Plaintiff further alleges and believes that the violations alleged herein will continue to occur into the future.
- 62. Based on the allegations herein, Defendants are liable for civil penalties of up to \$2,500.00 per day per individual exposure to DEHP from Travel Bottle Kits, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(b).
- 63. Plaintiff has engaged in good faith efforts to resolve the claims alleged herein prior to filing this Complaint.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Plaintiff demands against each of the Defendants as follows:

- 1. A permanent injunction mandating Proposition 65-compliant warnings;
- 2. Penalties pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7, subdivision (b);
- 3. Costs of suit;
- 4. Reasonable attorney fees and costs; and
- 5. Any further relief that the court may deem just and equitable.

YEROUSHALMI & YEROUSHALMI

BY:

Reuben Yeroushalmi

Attorneys for Plaintiff,

Consumer Advocacy Group, Inc.