1 2 3 4 5	Laralei Paras, SBN 203319 Brian Johnson, SBN 235965 SEVEN HILLS LLP 4 Embarcadero Center, Suite 1400 San Francisco, CA 94111 Telephone: (415) 926-7247 laralei@sevenhillsllp.com brian@sevenhillsllp.com	ELECTRONICALLY FILED Superior Court of California County of Marin 01/27/2025 James M. Kim, Clerk of the Court By: K. Keeton, Deputy	
6 7	Attorneys for Plaintiff KEEP AMERICA SAFE AND BEAUTIFUL		
8	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
9	COUNTY OF MARIN – UNLIMITED CIVIL JURISDICTION		
10	KEEP AMERICA SAFE AND BEAUTIFUL,	Case No. CV0005206	
11	Plaintiff,	COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES	
12	v.	AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF	
13 14	GOLDE WELLNESS INC.; AMAZON.COM, INC.; and DOES 1-30, inclusive,	Violation of Proposition 65, The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Health & Safety Code § 25249.5 <i>et</i> <i>seq.</i>)	
15 16	Defendants.	UNLIMITED CIVIL	
17	Plaintiff KEEP AMERICA SAFE AND BEAUTIFUL ("KASB" or "Plaintiff"), acting in the		
18	public interest, alleges a cause of action against Defendants GOLDE WELLNESS INC.;		
19	AMAZON.COM, INC. and DOES 1-30 ("Defendant") for their alleged violations of Health & Safety		
20	Code § 25249.6, et seq., as follows:		
21	INTRODUCTION AND	NATURE OF THE ACTION	
22	1. Plaintiff brings this representative ac	tion in the public interest on behalf of the citizens of	
23	the State of California. By this action, KASB seek	as to enforce the People's right to be informed of the	
24	health hazards caused by exposures to Lead, a heavy metal found in and on matcha powder		
25	manufactured, imported, distributed, sold or offered for sale by Defendant in the State of California.		
26	2. By this Complaint, plaintiff seeks to remedy Defendant's failure to warn individuals not		
27	covered by California's Occupational Safety Heal	th Act, Labor Code § 6300 et seq. ("consumers")	
28			
	COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENA	LTIES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF	

before exposure to substances known to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm through exposures to Lead when they purchase, use or ingest Defendant's matcha powder.

3. Detectable levels of Lead are found in the matcha powder Defendant manufactures, imports, sells or distributes for sale to individuals throughout California.

4. Pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, codified at Health and Safety Code § 25249.6 *et seq.* ("**Proposition 65**"), it is unlawful for a person in the course of doing business to knowingly and intentionally expose consumers in California to chemicals known to the State to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm, without first providing a "clear and reasonable" health hazard warning to such individuals prior to purchase or use.

5. Defendant manufactures, distributes, imports, sells, and offers for sale, in and into
 California matcha powder ("PRODUCTS") containing Lead, without providing a warning regarding
 the presence of and the harms associated with exposures to Lead in Defendants' PRODUCTS. Such
 PRODUCTS include, without limitation, *Golde Pure Matcha Ceremonial Grade Matcha Powder Green Tea Superfood with L-Theanine & Antioxidants (40g Tin) UPC: 8 50021 35800 6 ASIN:* B09GT4K3HC. Defendants' conduct is subject to civil penalties for each violation, enjoinment,
 preliminary and permanent injunctive relief. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(a) and (b)

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PARTIES

Plaintiff is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of California and acting in
 the public interest to reduce the presence of toxic chemicals found in consumer products and to
 enforce California citizens' right to be informed about the presence of toxic chemicals in the products
 they purchase and use and the harms associated with exposures to such chemicals. KASB is a
 "person" within the meaning of Health & Safety Code § 25249.11(a). It brings this action in the
 public interest, pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(d).

7. At all relevant times, Defendant GOLDE WELLNESS INC.; AMAZON.COM, INC.
("GOLDE WELLNESS") operated as a "person" "in the course of doing business" within the
meaning of and as defined by Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.6 and 25249.11.

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8. GOLDE WELLNESS manufactures, imports, distributes, sells and offers the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California, or implies by its conduct that it manufactures, imports, distributes, sells, and/or offers the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.

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9. At all relevant times, Defendant AMAZON.COM, INC. ("AMAZON") operated as a "person" "in the course of doing business" within the meaning of and as defined by Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.6 and 25249.11.

10. AMAZON manufactures, imports, distributes, sells and offers the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California, or implies by its conduct that it manufactures, imports, distributes, sells, and/or offers the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California.

10 11. Defendants DOES 1-10 ("MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS") are each a person in
11 the course of doing business within the meaning of and as defined by Health and Safety Code
12 §§ 25249.6 and 25249.11. MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS, and each of them, assemble,
13 fabricate, and manufacture, or each implies by its conduct that it does such for one or more of the
14 PRODUCTS offered for sale or use in California.

15 12. Defendants DOES 11-20 ("DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS") are each a person in the
16 course of doing business within the meaning of and as defined by Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.6
17 and 25249.11. DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS, and each of them, distribute, transfer, and transport,
18 or each impliedly does so by its conduct, one or more of the PRODUCTS to individuals, businesses,
19 or retailers for sale or use in the State of California

20 13. Defendants DOES 21-30 ("RETAILER DEFENDANTS") are each a person in the
21 course of doing business within the meaning of and as defined by Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.6
22 and 25249.11. RETAILER DEFENDANTS, and each of them, by and through their conduct, offer
23 the PRODUCTS for sale to individuals in the State of California.

14. At this time, the true names of Defendants DOES 1 through 30, inclusive, are unknown
to plaintiff, who, therefore, sues said DOES Defendants by their fictitious names, pursuant to Code of
Civil Procedure § 474. Each of the fictitiously named Defendants is responsible in some manner for
the acts and occurrences alleged herein and the damages caused thereby. When ascertained, Plaintiff
will identify these Doe Defendants by their true names in an amendment to this Complaint.

15. At all times mentioned herein, GOLDE WELLNESS, AMAZON, MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS, DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS, and RETAILER DEFENDANTS shall, hereinafter, where appropriate, be referred to collectively as the "**DEFENDANTS**."

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

16. This Court has jurisdiction over this action, pursuant to Health & Safety Code § 25249.7, allowing enforcement by any court of competent jurisdiction. The Superior Courts of the State of California have jurisdiction 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." The statute under which this action is brought does not specify any other basis of subject matter jurisdiction.

11 17. The Court has jurisdiction over DEFENDANTS, because DEFENDANTS, and each of
12 them, is a person, firm, corporation or association that is a citizen of the State of California, does
13 sufficient business in California, has sufficient minimum contacts in California, and/or otherwise
14 purposefully and intentionally avail themselves of the California market through their manufacture,
15 importation, distribution, promotion, marketing or sale of PRODUCTS within the California.
16 DEFENDANTS' purposeful availment renders the exercise of personal jurisdiction by this Court
17 consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

18 18. Venue is proper in the Superior Court for the County of Marin, pursuant to Code of
19 Civil Procedure §§ 393, 395, and 395.5, because this Court is a court of competent jurisdiction,
20 because plaintiff seeks civil penalties against DEFENDANTS, because one or more instances of
21 wrongful conduct occurred, and continue to occur, in this county, and/or because DEFENDANTS
22 conducted, and continue to conduct, business in the County of Marin with respect to the PRODUCTS
23 that are the subject of this action.

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REGULATORY BACKGROUND AND LAW

19. Formally known as the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 and
codified at Health & Safety Code § 25249.6 *et seq.*, Proposition 65 states, in relevant part, "[n]o
person in the course of doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a

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chemical known to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving a clear and reasonable 2 warning to such individual..."

20. Under the Act, a "person in the course of doing business" is defined as a business with ten (10) or more employees. Health & Safety Code § 25249.11(b). The Act prohibits businesses from exposing consumers to hazardous chemicals without first giving a "clear and reasonable" warning. Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.

7 21. Exposing consumers to hazardous chemicals means to cause individuals to ingest, 8 inhale, contact via body surfaces or otherwise come into contact with a listed chemical. Cal. Code 9 Regs. ("CCR"), tit. 27, § 25102(i). An exposure to a hazardous chemical is defined as that which 10 "results from a person's acquisition, purchase, storage, consumption or other reasonably foreseeable 11 use of a product..." 27 CCR § 25600(h).

12 22. Under Proposition 65, persons violating the statute may be enjoined in any court of 13 competent jurisdiction and may be subject to civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day, per violation. 14 Health & Safety Code § 25249.7.

15 23. On February 27, 1987, pursuant to Proposition 65's implementing regulations, 16 California listed Lead as a chemical known to the State to cause birth defects and reproductive harm 17 or reproductive toxicity. Lead became subject to the "clear and reasonable warning" requirements one 18 year later, on February 27, 1988. 27 CCR § 27001(c); Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.8, 19 25249.10(b).

20 24. On October 1, 1992, pursuant to Proposition 65's implementing regulations, California 21 identified and listed Lead as a chemical known to the State cause cancer. Lead became subject to the 22 "clear and reasonable warning" requirements one year later, on October 1, 1993. 27 CCR § 27001(c); 23 Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.8, 25249.10(b).

STATEMENT OF FACTS

25 25. DEFENDANTS sell and offer their PRODUCTS for sale in California without a clear and reasonable warning in violation of Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 27, § 25600, et seq. 26

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1 26. DEFENDANTS' PRODUCTS expose consumers in California to Lead at levels 2 requiring a warning under Proposition 65 when they ingest or otherwise consume the PRODUCTS 3 during reasonably foreseeable use. 27. On August 23, 2024, plaintiff served a 60-Day Notice of Violation ("Notice"), together 4 with the certificate of merit, on ANCESTRAL, the Office of the Attorney General of California, and 5 the requisite public enforcement agencies, alleging, as a result of DEFENDANTS' sales of the 6 7 PRODUCTS, consumers in the State of California were, and are, being exposed to Lead through their 8 reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS without first receiving a "clear and reasonable 9 warning," as required by Proposition 65. 10 28. After receiving Plaintiff's Notice, no public enforcement agency has commenced and is diligently prosecuting a cause of action against DEFENDANTS under Proposition 65 to enforce the 11 12 alleged violations that are the subject of the Notice. 13 FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION 14 (Violation of Proposition 65 - Against All DEFENDANTS) 15 Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully stated herein, the allegations 29. 16 set forth in Paragraphs 1 through 28, inclusive. 17 DEFENDANTS' PRODUCTS contain Lead in levels requiring a clear and reasonable 30. 18 warning under Proposition 65. 19 31. DEFENDANTS know or should have known the PRODUCTS they manufacture, 20 import, distribute, sell, and offer for sale in California contain Lead. As a result of Plaintiff's Notice, 21 DEFENDANTS now possess actual knowledge of the presence of Lead in the PRODUCTS. 22 32. DEFENDANTS' PRODUCTS expose consumers in California to Lead through 23 ingestion during the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS. 24 The normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS has caused, and 33. 25 continues to cause, exposures to Lead. 26 34. DEFENDANTS know or should know the normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the 27 PRODUCTS exposes individuals to Lead through ingestion. 28 5

COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

35. DEFENDANTS intend to expose consumers in California exposures to Lead during their 2 reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS. Such exposures to Lead occur through 3 DEFENDANTS deliberate and non-accidental participation in the California market.

The exposures to Lead, caused by DEFENDANTS and endured by consumers in 36. California, are not exempt from the "clear and reasonable" warning requirements of Proposition 65.

37. DEFENDANTS failed to provide a "clear and reasonable warning" to those consumers in California exposed to Lead through ingestion during their reasonably foreseeable uses of the PRODUCTS. DEFENDANTS continue to fail to provide such warning.

9 38. Contrary to the express policy and statutory prohibition of Proposition 65, consumers are exposed to Lead through ingestion during their use of PRODUCTS DEFENDANTS sold, sell and 10 11 offer for sale without a "clear and reasonable" warning. Such consumers suffer irreparable harms for which they have no plain, speedy, or adequate remedy at law. 12

- 13 39. DEFENDANTS manufacture, import, distribute, sell and offer the PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of Health and Safety Code § 25249.6, and DEFENDANTS' violations have 14 15 continued beyond their receipt of Plaintiff's Notice. As such, DEFENDANTS' violations are ongoing and continuous in nature and, unless enjoined, will continue in the future. 16
- 17 40. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(b), as a consequence of the above-18 described acts, DEFENDANTS, and each of them, are liable for a maximum civil penalty of \$2,500 19 per day for each violation.

2041. As a consequence of DEFENDANTS' acts and omissions,, Health and Safety Code 21 § 25249.7(a) specifically authorizes the Court to grant the relief prayed for herein.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, KASB prays for relief and judgment against DEFENDANTS, and each of them,

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as follows:

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1. That the Court, pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(a), preliminarily and 26 permanently enjoin DEFENDANTS from manufacturing, distributing, importing, marketing or 27 otherwise offering the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California without first providing a "clear and

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1	reasonable" warning to consumers regarding the presence of, and the harms associated with, with		
2	exposures to Lead;		
3	2. That the Court, pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(a), issue preliminary and	1	
4	permanent injunctions mandating DEFENDANTS recall all PRODUCTS currently in the chain of		
5	commerce in California that do not bear a clear and reasonable health hazard warning;		
6	3. That the Court assess civil penalties against DEFENDANTS, and each of them, in the		
7	amount of \$2,500 per day for each violation of Proposition 65, according to proof;		
8	4. That the Court award Plaintiff its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit; and		
9	5. That the Court grant any further relief as it deems just and equitable.		
10	Dated: January 24, 2025 Respectfully submitted,		
11	(A)		
12	By:		
13	Laralet Paras Attorneys for Plaintiff		
14	Keep America Safe and Beautiful		
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