

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Parties

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Environmental Health Advocates, Inc., ("EHA"), on the one hand, and Hardware Factory Store, Inc. ("Hardware"), on the other hand, with EHA and Hardware each individually referred to as a "Party" and collectively as the "Parties." EHA is a California corporation acting in the interest of the general public. EHA seeks to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals and to improve human health by reducing or eliminating hazardous substances used in consumer products. Hardware employs ten or more individuals and is a person in the course of doing business for purposes of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, California Health and Safety Code § 25249.6 *et seq.* ("Proposition 65").

1.2 General Allegations

EHA alleges that Hardware manufactures, sells, and distributes for sale in California **HARDWARE'S 6-PIECE TELESCOPING GAGE SET, WHEREIN THE STORAGE CASE FOR SAID PRODUCT**, contains Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate ("DEHP") and that it did so without first providing the health hazard warning required by Proposition 65. DEHP is listed pursuant to Proposition 65 as a chemical known to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm.

1.3 Product Description

The product covered by this Settlement Agreement is defined as, and expressly limited to, Hardware Factory Store Inc.'s 6-Piece Telescoping Gage Set **WHEREIN THE STORAGE CASE FOR SAID PRODUCT** contains DEHP and that is manufactured, sold or distributed for sale in California by Hardware ("Product").

1.4 Notice of Violation

On **OCTOBER 15, 2020**, EHA served Hardware Factory Store, Inc., Amazon.com, Inc., the California Attorney General and other requisite public enforcers with a 60-Day Notice of Violation ("Notice"), alleging that Hardware violated Proposition 65 when it failed to warn its customers and consumers in California of the health risks associated with exposures to DEHP from the Product. To the best of the Parties' knowledge, no public enforcer has commenced and is diligently prosecuting an action to enforce the violations alleged in the Notice against Hardware.

1.5 No Admission

Hardware denies the material, factual, and legal allegations in the Notice and maintains that all of the product it sold and/or distributed for sale in California, including the Product, have been, and are, in compliance with all laws. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by Hardware of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law or violation of law, nor shall compliance with this Settlement Agreement constitute or be construed as an admission by Hardware of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law or violation of law, such being specifically denied by Hardware. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect Hardware's obligations, responsibilities, and duties under this Settlement Agreement.

1.6 Effective Date

For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, the term "Effective Date" shall mean sixty (60) days following the execution of this Settlement Agreement by the Parties.

2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: REFORMULATION OF PRODUCTS

2.1 Clear and Reasonable Warnings

Commencing on the Effective Date, and continuing thereafter, Hardware agrees to engage in online sales into California of Products only with a warning as provided for in Section 2.2.

2.2 General Warning Requirements

For purposes of this Consent Judgment, a clear and reasonable warning shall consist of one of the alternate forms of warning shown below, displayed with such conspicuousness, as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices as to render it likely to be seen, read, and understood by an ordinary individual under customary conditions prior to completing an online purchase. The warning shall include a symbol consisting of a black exclamation point in a yellow equilateral triangle with a bold black outline. The symbol shall be placed to the left of the text of the warning, in a size no smaller than the height of the word "WARNING", as follows:

⚠WARNING: This product can expose you to chemicals including DEHP, which is known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.

Or (alternate form of warning):

⚠WARNING: Cancer and Reproductive Harm —
www.P65Warnings.cs.gov

Or (alternate form of warning):

WARNING: This product can expose you to chemicals including DEHP [Di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate], which is known to the State of California to cause cancer. For more information go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov; To mitigate your risk of exposure to

**DEHP, you should consider wearing
work gloves when you use tools with
vinyl grips.**

For selling Products via an internet website to customers located in California, the warning requirements of this section shall be satisfied if the foregoing warning appears: (a) on the same web page on which a Products is displayed and/or described; (b) on the same page as the price for the Products; or (c) on one or more web pages displayed to a purchaser prior to completing an online purchase. Alternatively, a symbol consisting of a black exclamation point in a yellow or white equilateral triangle may appear adjacent to or immediately following the display, description, price, or checkout listing of the Products, if the warning statement appears elsewhere on the same web page in a manner that clearly associates it with the product(s) to which the warning applies.

2.3 Grace Period for Existing Inventory of Products

The injunctive requirements of Section 2 shall not apply to Products that are already in the stream of commerce as of the Effective Date, which Products are expressly subject to the releases provided in Section 4.

3. MONETARY SETTLEMENT TERMS

3.1 Civil Penalty Payment

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(b)(2), and in settlement of all claims alleged in the Notice or referred to in this Settlement Agreement, Hardware agrees to pay one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) in civil penalties. The penalty payment will be allocated in accordance with California Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.12(c)(1) & (d), with 75% of the penalty amount paid to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("OEHHA") and the remaining 25% of the penalty amount retained by EHA. Within ten (10) days of the date this Settlement Agreement is executed by the Parties, Hardware shall issue two separate checks for the initial civil penalty payment to (a) "OEHHA" in the amount of seven-hundred and fifty dollars (\$750.00) and (b) Environmental Health Advocates, in the amount of two hundred and fifty dollars

(\$250.00).

All payments owed to OEHHHA (EIN: 68-0284486), pursuant to this Section shall be delivered directly to OEHHHA (Memo Line "Prop 65 Penalties") at the following addresses:

For Federal Express Two-Day Delivery:

Mike Gyurics
Fiscal Operations Branch Chief
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
P.O. Box 4010
Sacramento, CA 95812-4010

For Non- Federal Express Two-Day Delivery:

Mike Gyurics
Fiscal Operations Branch Chief
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

All penalty payments owed to EHA shall be sent to:

Environmental Health Advocates
225 Broadway, Suite 1900
San Diego, CA 92101

3.2 Attorney Fees and Costs

The Parties reached an accord on the compensation due to EHA and its counsel under the private attorney general doctrine and principles of contract law. Under these legal principles, within ten (10) days of the date this Settlement Agreement is executed by the Parties, Hardware agrees to pay eleven thousand dollars (\$11,000) to EHA and its counsel for all fees and costs incurred in investigating, bringing this matter to the attention of Hardware, and negotiating a settlement. Hardware's payment shall be delivered in the form of two checks: (1) one check for five thousand five hundred dollars (\$5,500.00) payable to "Glick Law Group"; and (2) one check for five thousand five hundred dollars (\$5,500.00) payable to "Nicholas & Tomasevic LLP."

3.3 Payment Addresses

All payments required under this Section shall be delivered:

The Glick Law Group Payment to:

Noam Glick
Glick Law Group
225 Broadway, Suite 1900
San Diego, CA 92101

The Nicholas & Tomasevic, LLP Payment to:

Craig Nicholas
Nicholas & Tomasevic, LLP
225 Broadway, Suite 1900
San Diego, CA 92101

3.4 Tax Documentation

Hardware agrees to provide a completed IRS 1099 for its payments to, and EHA agrees to provide IRS W-9 forms for, each of the payees under this Settlement Agreement. The Parties acknowledge that Hardware cannot issue any settlement payments pursuant to Section 3.1 and 3.2 above until after Hardware receives the requisite W-9 forms from EHA's counsel.

4. CLAIMS COVERED AND RELEASED

4.1 EHA's Release of Hardware

This Settlement Agreement is a full, final, and binding resolution between EHA, on its own behalf and not on behalf of the public, and Hardware of any violation of Proposition 65 that was or could have been asserted by EHA, on its own behalf, on behalf of its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and assignees, against Hardware and each of its respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities under common ownership, directors, officers, members, employees, attorneys, each upstream entity from whom the Product was purchased by Hardware, and each entity to whom Hardware directly or indirectly distributed or sold the Product, including, but not limited to, its downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers, franchisees, cooperative members and licensees ("Releasees"), based on the failure to warn about exposures to DEHP in the Product manufactured, sold or distributed for sale in California by Hardware before the Effective Date, as alleged in the Notice.

In further consideration of the promises and agreements herein contained, EHA on its own behalf and not on behalf of the public, on behalf of its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and assignees hereby waives any and all rights it may have to institute or participate in, directly or indirectly, any form of legal action and releases all claims against Hardware and Releasees including, without limitation, all actions and causes of action, suits, liabilities, demands, obligations, damages, costs, fines, penalties, losses or expenses including, but not exclusively, investigation fees, expert fees and attorney fees arising under Proposition 65 with respect to the alleged or actual failure to warn about exposures to DEHP in the Product manufactured, distributed, sold or offered for sale by Hardware, before the Effective Date.

4.2 Hardware's Release of EHA

a. Hardware, on its own behalf and on behalf of its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and assignees, hereby waives any and all claims against EHA and its attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken, or statements made by EHA and its attorneys and other representatives, whether in the course of investigating claims or otherwise seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in connection with the Product.

b. 4.3 Mutual Release of Known and Unknown Claims

c. EHA, on behalf of itself and its agents, attorneys, representatives, successors, and assigns, in its respective individual capacity only and not in its representative capacity, and Hardware, each provide a general release of the other including the Releasees herein which shall be effective as a full and final accord and satisfaction, as a bar to all claims of any nature, character or kind, known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, arising out of alleged violations of Proposition 65 with respect to the Products. EHA and Hardware each acknowledge that they are each familiar with Section 1542 of the California Civil Code, which provides as follows:

d. A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS THAT THE CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT KNOW OR SUSPECT TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE AND THAT, IF KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY AFFECTED HIS OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR OR RELEASED PARTY.

5. SEVERABILITY

If, subsequent to the execution of this Settlement Agreement, any provision of this Settlement Agreement is held by a court to be unenforceable, the validity of the remaining provisions shall not be adversely affected.

6. GOVERNING LAW

The terms of this Settlement Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California and apply within the State of California.

7. NOTICE

Unless specified herein, all correspondence and notice required to be provided pursuant to this Settlement Agreement shall be in writing and sent by: (a) personal delivery; (b) first-class, registered or certified mail, return receipt requested; or (c) a recognized overnight courier on any Party by the other at the following addresses:

For Hardware:

Rami Kayyali
Demidchik Law Firm
923 E Valley Blvd, STE 268
San Gabriel, CA 91776

For EHA:

Noam Glick
Glick Law Group
225 Broadway, Suite 1900
San Diego, CA 92101

Any Party may, from time to time, specify in writing to the other a change of address to which all notices and other communications shall be sent.

8. COUNTERPARTS; FACSIMILE SIGNATURES

This Settlement Agreement may be executed in counterparts and by facsimile or portable document format (PDF) signature, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which, when taken together, shall constitute one and the same document.

9. **COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(f)**

EHA and its attorneys agree to comply with the reporting form requirements referenced in California Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(f).

10. **MODIFICATION**

This Settlement Agreement may be modified only by written agreement of the Parties.

11. **AUTHORIZATION**


The undersigned are authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement on behalf of their respective Parties and have read, understood, and agree to all of the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement.

AGREED TO:

AGREED TO:

Date: April 16, 2021

Date: 4/15/2021

By: 

By: 

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
ADVOCATES, INC.

HARDWARE FACTORY STORE, INC.