

## SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**1.1 The Parties.** This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Gabriel Espinoza (“Espinoza”) and Brighton-Best International, Inc. (“Brighton-Best”). Together, Espinoza and Brighton-Best are collectively referred to as the “Parties.” Espinoza is an individual who resides in the State of California, and seeks to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals and to improve human health by reducing or eliminating hazardous substances contained in consumer products. Espinoza alleges that Brighton-Best is a person in the course of doing business for purposes of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, Health & Safety Code § 25249.6, *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”).

**1.2 General Allegations.** Espinoza alleges that Brighton-Best has exposed individuals to the chemical chromium (hexavalent compounds) (“chromium (VI) or “(CrVI)”) from its sales of leather gloves or gloves with leather components, including but not limited to Ironclad Ranchworx gloves without first providing users and consumers of the product with a clear and reasonable health hazard exposure warning as required pursuant to Proposition 65. CrVI is listed pursuant to Proposition 65 as a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer and adverse developmental effects in both males and females.

**1.3 Product Description.** The products covered by this Settlement Agreement are leather gloves or gloves with leather components, including but not limited to Ironclad Ranchworx gloves (the “Products”) that have been imported, distributed, offered for sale and/or sold in California by Brighton-Best.

**1.4 Notice of Violation.** On July 16, 2021, Espinoza served Brighton-Best, Target Brands, Inc. and Target Corporation (collectively, “Target”), and various public enforcement agencies with a document entitled “Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code § 25249.6, *et seq.*” (the “Notice”). The Notice provided Brighton-Best and such others, including public enforcers, with notice that alleged that Brighton-Best was in violation of California Health & Safety Code § 25249.6, for failing to warn California consumers and customers that use of the Products will expose them to CrVI.

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To the Parties's knowledge, no public enforcer has diligently prosecuted the allegations set forth in the Notice.

**1.5 No Admission.** Brighton-Best denies the material factual and legal allegations contained in the Notice and maintains that, to the best of its knowledge, all products that are or have been sold and distributed in California, including the Products, have been and are in compliance with Proposition 65. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by Brighton-Best of any fact, finding, issue of law, or violation of law; nor shall compliance with this Settlement Agreement constitute or be construed as an admission by Brighton-Best of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law or violation of law, such being specifically denied by Brighton-Best. However, this § 1.5 shall not diminish or otherwise affect the obligations, responsibilities and duties under this Settlement Agreement. Notwithstanding the allegations in the Notice, Brighton-Best maintains that it has not knowingly manufactured, or caused to be manufactured, the Products for sale in California in violation of Proposition 65.

**1.6 Effective Date.** For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, the term "Effective Date" shall mean 30 days from the date: a) this Agreement is last executed by the Parties; and b) Espinoza has provided Brighton-Best with all applicable W-9 tax identification documents pursuant to Section 3.2(c), below.

## **2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: WARNINGS**

**2.1 Clear and Reasonable Warning.** Within thirty (30) days from the Effective Date, and continuing thereafter, a clear and reasonable exposure warning as set forth in this §§ 2.1 and 2.2 must be provided for all Products that Brighton-Best manufacturers, imports, distributes, sells, or offers for sale in California. There shall be no obligation for Brighton-Best to provide an exposure warning for Products that entered the stream of commerce, were imported, ordered, or manufactured prior to the Effective Date. The warning shall consist of either the **Warning** or **Alternative Warning** described in §§ 2.1(a) or (b), respectively:

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(a) **Warning.** The “Warning” shall consist of the statement:

**⚠ WARNING:** This product can expose you to chemicals including chromium (hexavalent compounds), which are known to the State of California to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov).

(b) **Alternative Warning:** Brighton-Best may, but is not required to, use the alternative short-form warning as set forth in this § 2.1(b) (“**Alternative Warning**”) as follows:

**⚠ WARNING:** Cancer and Reproductive Harm - [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov).

**2.2** A **Warning** or **Alternative Warning** provided pursuant to § 2.2 must print the word “**WARNING:**” in all capital letters and in bold font, followed by a colon. The warning symbol to the left of the word “**WARNING:**” must be a black exclamation point in a yellow equilateral triangle with a black outline, except that if the sign or label for the Products does not use the color yellow, the symbol may be in black and white. The symbol must be in a size no smaller than the height of the word “**WARNING:**”. The warning shall be affixed to or printed on the Products’ packaging or labeling, or on a placard, shelf tag, sign or electronic device or automatic process, providing that the warning is displayed with such conspicuousness, as compared with other words, statements, or designs as to render it likely to be read and understood by an ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase or use. The warning may be contained in the same section of the packaging, labeling, or instruction booklet that states other safety warnings, if any, concerning the use of the Product and shall be at least the same size as those other safety warnings.

If Brighton-Best sells Products via an internet website to customers located in California, the warning requirements of this section shall be satisfied if the foregoing warning appears either: (a) on the same web page on which a Product is displayed and/or described; (b) on the same page as the price for the Product; (c) on one or more web pages displayed to a purchaser prior to purchase during the checkout process or (d) by use of the word **WARNING** with a hyperlink to a warning under section 2.1(a) or (b) pursuant to California Code of Regulations title 27 section 25602(b). 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 Product,

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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 Compliance with Warning Regulations.** The Parties agree that Brighton-Best shall be deemed to be in compliance with this Settlement Agreement by either adhering to §§ 2.1 and 2.2 of this Settlement Agreement or by complying with warning requirements adopted by the State of California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("OEHHA") after the Effective Date.

### **3. PENALTIES PURSUANT TO HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(b)**

In settlement of all the claims referred to in this Settlement Agreement, Brighton-Best shall pay \$7,000.00 as a Civil Penalty in accordance with this Section. The Civil Penalty payment shall be allocated in accordance with California Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.12(c)(1) and (d), with 75% of the Penalty remitted to OEHHA and the remaining 25% of the Penalty remitted to Espinoza. The Civil Penalty payment(s) shall be delivered to the addresses identified in § 3.2, below. For all amounts due and owing that are not received within the payment times set forth below, Brighton-Best shall pay a late civil penalty payment fee equal to \$100/day to be allocated in accordance with California Health & Safety Code § 25249.12(c)(1) and (d).

**3.1 Civil Penalty.** Within thirty (30) days of the Effective Date, Brighton-Best shall issue two separate checks for the Civil Penalty payment to (a) "OEHHA" in the amount of \$5,250.00; and to (b) "Brodsky Smith in Trust for Espinoza" in the amount of \$1,750.00. The Civil Penalty payment(s) shall be delivered to the addresses identified in § 3.2, below.

#### **3.2 Payment Procedures.**

(a) **Issuance of Payments.** Payments shall be delivered as follows:

(i) All payments owed to Espinoza, pursuant to § 3.1 shall be delivered to the following payment address:

Evan J. Smith, Esquire  
Brodsky Smith  
Two Bala Plaza, Suite 805  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

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(ii) All payments owed to OEHHA (EIN: 68-0284486), pursuant to § 3.1 shall be delivered directly to OEHHA (Memo Line “Prop 65 Penalties”) at the following addresses:

For United States Postal Service Delivery:

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

For Non-United States Postal Service Delivery:

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

(b) **Copy of Payments to OEHHA.** Brighton-Best agrees to provide Espinoza’s counsel with a copy of the checks payable to OEHHA, simultaneous with its penalty payments to Espinoza, to be delivered to the address provided in § 3.2(a)(i), as proof of payment to OEHHA.

(c) **Tax Documentation.** Brighton-Best agrees to provide a completed IRS 1099 for its payments to, and Espinoza agrees to provide IRS W-9 forms for, each of the following payees under this Settlement Agreement:

(i) “Gabriel Espinoza” whose address and tax identification number shall be provided within five (5) days after this Settlement Agreement is fully executed by the Parties;

(ii) “Brodsky Smith” (EIN: 23-2971061) at the address provided in Section 3.2(a)(i); and

(iii) “Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment” 1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.

**4. REIMBURSEMENT OF FEES AND COSTS**

The Parties acknowledge that Espinoza and his counsel offered to reach preliminary agreement on the material terms of this dispute before reaching terms on the amount of fees and costs to be reimbursed to them. The Parties thereafter reached an accord on the compensation due to Espinoza and his counsel under general contract principles and the private attorney general doctrine and principles codified at California Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5, for all work performed through the mutual execution of this agreement. Under these legal principles, Brighton-Best shall reimburse Espinoza's counsel for fees and costs incurred as a result of investigating and bringing this matter to Brighton-Best's attention, and negotiating a settlement in the public interest. Within thirty (30) days of the Effective Date, Brighton-Best shall issue a check payable to "Brotsky Smith" in the amount of \$65,500.00 for delivery to the address identified in § 3.2(a)(i), above.

**5. RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS**

**5.1 Release of Brighton-Best and Downstream Customers and Entities.** This Settlement Agreement is a full, final and binding resolution between Espinoza, acting on his own behalf, and Brighton-Best, of any violation of Proposition 65 that was or could have been asserted by Espinoza or on behalf of his past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assigns ("Releasers") for failure to provide warnings for alleged exposures to CrVI from use of the Products, and Releasers hereby release any such claims against Brighton-Best and its parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities, shareholders, marketplaces, directors, officers, agents, employees, attorneys, successors and assignees, and each entity to whom Brighton-Best directly or indirectly distributes or sells the Products, including but not limited to Target, its respective subsidiaries, affiliates and parents, franchisees, cooperative members and licensees (collectively, the "Releasees"), from all claims for violations of Proposition 65 through the Effective Date.

In further consideration of the promises and agreements herein contained, and for the payments to be made pursuant to §§ 3 and 4 above, Espinoza, on behalf of himself, his past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and/or assignees, hereby covenants not to sue and waives any right to institute, participate in, directly or indirectly, any form of legal action and releases all claims

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that he may have, including without limitation, all actions and causes of action in law and in equity, all obligations, expenses (including without limitation all attorneys' fees, expert fees, and investigation fees, and costs), damages, losses, liabilities and demands against any of the Releasees of any nature, character, or kind, whether known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, limited to and arising out of the alleged or actual exposure to the chemical CrVI from use of the Products.

**5.2 Brighton-Best's Release of Espinoza.** Brighton-Best, on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and/or assignees, hereby waives any and all claims against Espinoza, his attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken or statements made (or those that could have been taken or made) by Espinoza and/or his attorneys and other representatives, whether in the course of investigating claims or otherwise seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter or with respect to the Products.

**5.3 California Civil Code § 1542.** It is possible that other claims not known to the Parties arising out of the facts alleged in the Notice and relating to the Products will develop or be discovered. Espinoza on behalf of himself only, on one hand, and Brighton-Best, on the other hand, acknowledge that this Agreement is expressly intended to cover and include all such claims up through the Effective Date, including all rights of action therefor. The Parties acknowledge that the claims released in §§ 5.1 and 5.2, above, may include unknown claims, and nevertheless waive California Civil Code § 1542 as to any such unknown claims. California Civil Code § 1542 reads as follows:

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.

Espinoza and Brighton-Best each acknowledge and understand the significance and consequences of this specific waiver of California Civil Code § 1542.

**5.4 Deemed Compliance with Proposition 65.** The Parties agree that compliance by Brighton-Best with this Settlement Agreement constitutes compliance with Proposition 65 with respect to exposure to CrVI from use of the Products. The Parties agree that after the Effective Date,

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should compliance with Proposition 65 with respect to CrVI from use of the Products be governed by operation of law (*i.e.*, Court Order regarding CrVI in leather products, or other regulatory exemption) Brighton-Best may choose to comply with such operation of law and such action would not be a breach or violation of this Settlement Agreement.

**5.5. Public Benefit.** It is the Parties' understanding that the commitments agreed to herein, and actions to be taken by Brighton-Best under this Settlement Agreement, would confer a significant benefit to the general public, as set forth in Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5 and Cal. Admin. Code tit. 11, § 3201. As such, it is the Parties' intent that to the extent any other private party initiates an action alleging a violation of Proposition 65 with respect to Brighton-Best's alleged failure to provide a warning concerning exposure to CrVI prior to use of the Products it has manufactured, distributed, sold, or offered for sale in California, or will manufacture, distribute, sell, or offer for sale in California, such private party action would not confer a significant benefit on the general public as to those Products addressed in this Settlement Agreement, provided that Brighton-Best is in material compliance with this Settlement Agreement.

## **6. SEVERABILITY**

If, subsequent to the execution of this Settlement Agreement, any of the provisions of this Settlement Agreement are deemed by a court to be unenforceable, the validity of the enforceable provisions remaining shall not be adversely affected but only to the extent the deletion of the provision deemed unenforceable does not materially affect, or otherwise result in the effect of the Settlement Agreement being contrary to the intent of the Parties in entering into this Settlement Agreement.

## **7. GOVERNING LAW**

The terms of this Settlement Agreement shall be governed by the law of the State of California and apply within the State of California. In the event that Proposition 65 is repealed or is otherwise rendered inapplicable or limited by reason of law generally, or as to the Products, Brighton-Best shall provide written notice to Espinoza of any asserted change in the law, and shall have no further obligations pursuant to this Settlement Agreement with respect to, and to the extent that, a Product is so affected.



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**8. NOTICES**

Unless specified herein, all correspondence and notices required to be provided pursuant to this Settlement Agreement shall be in writing and personally delivered or sent by: (i) first-class (registered or certified mail) return receipt requested; or (ii) overnight or two-day courier on any party by the other party to the following addresses:

For Brighton-Best:

Dennis Raglin  
Steptoe & Johnson LLP  
633 West Fifth Street, Suite 1900  
Los Angeles, CA 90071

For Espinoza:

Evan J. Smith  
Brodsky Smith  
Two Bala Plaza, Suite 805  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

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

**9. COUNTERPARTS: SIGNATURES**

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

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

Espinoza agrees to comply with the reporting requirements referenced in Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(f).

**11. MODIFICATION**

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

**12. ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

This Settlement Agreement contains the sole and entire agreement of the Parties and any and all prior negotiations and understandings related hereto shall be deemed to have been merged within

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it. No representations or terms of agreement other than those contained herein exist or have been made by any Party with respect to the other Party or the subject matter hereof.

13. AUTHORIZATION


The undersigned are authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement and have read, understood and agree to all of the terms and conditions contained of this Settlement Agreement.

AGREED TO:

AGREED TO:

Date: 12-23-2021

Date: 12/17/2021

By:   
Gabriel Espinoza

By:  / Jun Xu  
Brighton-Best International, Inc.