

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Parties

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Audrey Donaldson (“Donaldson”) and Big Lots Stores, Inc. (“Big Lots”). Donaldson and Big Lots shall each be referred to as a “Party” and collectively as the “Parties.” Donaldson is an individual residing in the State of California who seeks to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals and to improve human health by reducing or eliminating hazardous substances used in consumer products. Big Lots 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 section 25249.6 *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”).

1.2 General Allegations

Donaldson alleges that Big Lots manufactures, sells, and distributes for sale in California, pillows with PVC components containing the phthalate chemical di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (“DEHP”). DEHP is listed pursuant to Proposition 65 as a chemical known to cause birth defects and other reproductive harm. Donaldson alleges that Big Lots failed to provide the health hazard warning required by Proposition 65 for exposures to DEHP.

1.3 Product Description

The products covered by this Settlement Agreement are specifically defined as, and limited to, the *Big Lots Broyhill Pillow; UPC: 4 81051 23980 7*, manufactured, sold, or distributed for sale in California by Big Lots (hereinafter the “Products”).

1.4 Notice of Violation

On December 28, 2021, Donaldson served Big Lots, and the requisite public enforcement agencies with a 60-Day Notice of Violation (“Notice”), alleging that the notice recipients violated Proposition 65 by failing to warn their customers and consumers in California of the health hazards associated with exposures to DEHP from

the Products. No public enforcer has commenced and is diligently prosecuting the allegations set forth in the Notice.

1.5 No Admission

Big Lots denies the material, factual, and legal allegations contained in the Notice and maintains that all of the products that it has sold and distributed in California, including the Products, have been, and are, in compliance with all laws. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by Big Lots 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 Big Lots of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, such being specifically denied by Big Lots. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect Big Lots' obligations, responsibilities, and duties under this Settlement Agreement.

1.6 Effective Date

For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, the term "Effective Date" shall mean March 3, 2022.

2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: REFORMULATION/WARNING

2.1 Reformulation Standards

"Reformulated Products" are defined as those Products containing DEHP in concentrations less than 0.1 percent (1,000 parts per million) when analyzed pursuant to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency testing methodologies 3580A and 8270C, or any other methodologies utilized by federal or state agencies for the purpose of determining the DEHP content in a solid substance.

2.2 Reformulation/Warning Commitment

As of the Effective Date, Big Lots shall not sell or offer the Products for sale in the State of California unless they are Reformulated Products pursuant to Section 2.1 or contain a warning as set forth in Section 2.3 below. The Parties agree and intend that

compliance with the terms of this Settlement Agreement shall constitute compliance with Proposition 65 with respect to exposures to DEHP from the Products.

2.3 Warnings

As of the Effective Date, all Products Big Lots sells and/or distributes for sale in California that do not qualify as Reformulated Products, shall bear a clear and reasonable warning pursuant to this Section. Big Lots further agrees that the warning shall be prominently placed with such conspicuousness when compared with other words, statements, designs or devices as to render it likely to be read and understood by an ordinary individual under customary conditions of use. For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, a clear and reasonable warning for the Products shall consist of a warning affixed directly to the product or product packaging, label, or tag, for Products sold in California and containing one of the following statements:

 **WARNING:** Reproductive Harm- www.P65Warnings.ca.gov

OR

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

The above warning statements shall also include a symbol consisting of a black exclamation point in a yellow equilateral triangle with a bold black outline. Where the label is not printed using the color yellow, the symbol may be printed in black and white. 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.”

2.4 Point of Sale and Internet Warnings

The warning requirements of Section 2.3 shall also be satisfied if Big Lots provides warnings to Customers at the point-of-sale. Customers purchasing Products directly from California retail stores shall receive the Proposition 65 warning via register display and on customers’ printed receipts.

If Big Lots sells Products via its own proprietary internet website to customers located in California, the warning requirements of this section, and Section 2.3, 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 California purchaser prior to completion of the checkout process; or (d) via the “product details” section of the Product page. 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, 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.

3. MONETARY SETTLEMENT TERMS

3.1 Civil Penalty Payment

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(b)(2), and as consideration for the releases contained in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 below, Big Lots agrees to pay, no later than the Effective Date, \$2,200 in civil penalties. The penalty payment will be allocated in accordance with California Health and Safety Code section 25249.12(c)(1) & (d), with 75% of the penalty amount remitted to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“OEHHA”) and the remaining 25% of the penalty amount paid to Donaldson, and delivered to the address in Section 3.3 herein. Big Lots will provide its payment, on or before the Effective Date, in two checks as follows: (1) “OEHHA” in the amount of \$1,650; and (2) “Audrey Donaldson” in the amount of \$550.

3.2 Attorneys’ Fees and Costs

The Parties acknowledge that Donaldson and her counsel offered to resolve this dispute without reaching terms on the amount of fees and costs to be reimbursed to them, thereby leaving the issue to be resolved after the material terms of the agreement had been settled. Shortly after the other settlement terms had been reached, Big Lots

expressed a desire to resolve the attorneys' fees and costs. The Parties reached an accord on the compensation due to Donaldson's counsel under general contract principles and the private attorney general doctrine codified at Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5 for all work performed in this matter. Under these legal principles, Big Lots agrees to pay, no later than the Effective Date, \$16,800, in the form of a check made payable to "Voorhees & Bailey, LLP," for all fees and costs incurred investigating, bringing this matter to the attention of Big Lots' management, and negotiating a settlement.

3.3 Payment Address

All payments under this Settlement Agreement shall be delivered to the following address:

Voorhees & Bailey, LLP
990 Amarillo Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94303

4. CLAIMS COVERED AND RELEASED

4.1 Donaldson's Release of Proposition 65 Claims

Donaldson acting on her own behalf, and *not* on behalf of the public, releases Big Lots, its parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities under common ownership, directors, officers, agents employees, attorneys, and each entity to whom Big Lots directly or indirectly distributes or sells Products, including, but not limited, to downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers, franchisees, cooperative members, importers, and licensees (collectively, "Releasees"), from all claims for violations of Proposition 65 through the Effective Date relating to unwarned exposures to DEHP in the Products. The Parties further understand and agree that this Section 4.1 release shall not extend upstream to any entities that manufactured the Products or any component parts thereof, or any distributors or suppliers who sold the Products or any component parts thereof to Big Lots.

4.2 Donaldson's Individual Release of Claims

Donaldson, in her individual capacity only and *not* in her representative capacity, provides a release herein which shall be effective as a full and final accord and satisfaction, as a bar to all actions, causes of action, obligations, costs, expenses, attorneys' fees, damages, losses, claims, liabilities, and demands of Donaldson of any nature, character, or kind, whether known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, arising out of alleged or actual exposures to DEHP in the Products manufactured, imported, distributed, or sold by Big Lots prior to the Effective Date. The Parties further understand and agree that this Section 4.2 release shall not extend upstream to any entities that manufactured the Products, or any component parts thereof, or any distributors or suppliers who sold the Products, or any component parts thereof to Big Lots.

4.3 Big Lots' Release of Donaldson

Big Lots, on its own behalf, and on behalf of its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assignees, hereby waives any and all claims against Donaldson and her attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken or statements made by Donaldson and her attorneys and other representatives, whether in the course of investigating claims, seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter, or with respect to the Products.

5. SEVERABILITY

If, subsequent to the execution of this Settlement Agreement, any provision of this Settlement Agreement is deemed 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. In the event that Proposition 65 is repealed or is otherwise rendered inapplicable by reason of law generally, or as to the

Products, then Big Lots may provide written notice to Donaldson of any asserted change in the law and shall have no further injunctive obligations pursuant to this Settlement Agreement with respect to, and to the extent that, the Products are so affected.

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 Big Lots:

Carol R. Brophy, Esq.
One Market Street
Spear Tower, Suite 3900
San Francisco, CA 94105

For Donaldson:

Voorhees & Bailey, LLP
Proposition 65 Coordinator
535 Ramona Street; Suite 5
Palo Alto, CA 94301

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)

Donaldson and her attorneys agree to comply with the reporting form requirements referenced in California Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(f).

10. MODIFICATION

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

11. 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 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.

12. AUTHORIZATION

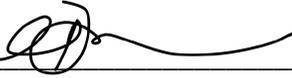
The undersigned are authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement on behalf of their respective Parties and have read, understand, and agreed to all of the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement.

AGREED TO:

AGREED TO:

Date: Feb 25, 2022, 2022

Date: _____, 2022

By: 

AUDREY DONALDSON

By: _____
BIG LOTS STORES, INC.

and any and all prior negotiations and understandings related hereto shall be deemed to have been merged within 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.

12. AUTHORIZATION

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

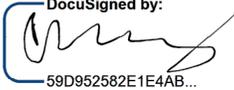
AGREED TO:

Date: _____, 2022

By: _____
AUDREY DONALDSON

AGREED TO:

3/22/2022
Date: _____, 2022

By:  _____
BIG LOTS STORES, LLC.