

## **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 GMI Trading LLC (“GMI”), on the other hand, with EHA and GMI each individually referred to as a “Party” and collectively as the “Parties.” EHA is a corporation in the State of California serving in the interest of the general public by seeking to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals and to improve human health by reducing or eliminating hazardous substances used in consumer products. EHA alleges that GMI 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 GMI manufactures, sells, and/or distributes for sale in California, mushrooms products that contain Mercury and that it does so without first providing the health hazard warning required by Proposition 65. mercury is listed pursuant to Proposition 65 as a chemical known to cause reproductive toxicity and developmental toxicity.

#### **1.3 Product Description**

The products covered by this Settlement Agreement are defined as, and expressly limited to Mixed Mushrooms Marinated (“Covered Products”), that are manufactured, sold and/or distributed for sale in California by GMI.

#### **1.4 Notice of Violation**

On or around October 20, 2023, EHA served GMI, the California Attorney General, and certain other public enforcement agencies with a 60-Day Notice of Violation of Proposition 65 (“Notice”). The Notice alleged that GMI had violated Proposition 65 by failing to sufficiently warn consumers in California of the health hazards associated with exposures to mercury contained in Covered Products.

On or around November 22, 2023, EHA served GMI, the California Attorney General, and certain other public enforcement agencies with an amended 60-Day Notice of Violation of

Proposition 65 adding two additional addresses for GMI (“ Amended Notice”). Collectively the Notice and the Amended Notice are referred to hereafter as the “Notices”.

To the best of the parties’ knowledge, no public enforcer has commenced or is otherwise prosecuting an action to enforce the violations alleged in the Notices.

### **1.5 No Admission**

GMI denies the material, factual, and legal allegations in the Notices and maintains that all of the products it sold and/or distributed for sale in California, including Covered Products, have been, and are, in compliance with all laws. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by GMI 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 GMI of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law or violation of law, such being specifically denied by GMI. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect GMI'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 the date this Settlement Agreement is executed by the Parties.

### **1.7 Compliance Date**

For purposes of this Settlement, the term “Compliance Date” means 30 days from the Effective Date.

## **2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**


### **2.1 Warnings**

Beginning on or before the Compliance Date, GMI Trading LLC shall be permanently enjoined from manufacturing, distributing, or directly selling in the State of California, any Covered Product that exposes a person to Mercury unless such Covered Products comply with the warning requirements of Section 2.2. As used in this Section 2, “distributed for sale in CA” means to directly ship Covered Products into California or to sell Covered Products to a distributor GMI Trading LLC knows will sell Covered Products in California.

## 2.2 General Warning Requirements

Commencing on the Compliance Date, GMI agrees any Covered Product sold that was not reformulated pursuant to paragraph 2.1 shall contain a Proposition 65 warning. GMI agrees that each warning shall be prominently placed with such conspicuousness, as 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 before purchase or use. Each warning shall be provided in a manner such that the consumer or user understands to which *specific* Covered Products the warning applies, so as to minimize the risk of consumer confusion.

For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, a clear and reasonable warning for the Covered Products shall consist of a warning affixed to the packaging, label, tag, directly to each Covered Products sold in California by GMI, or on a placard, shelf tag, sign or electronic device or automatic process that contains one of the following statements:

- 1)  **WARNING:** Consuming this product can expose you to chemicals including Mercury, which are known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information, go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food).

OR

- 2)  **WARNING:** Reproductive Harm – [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food).

This warning statement shall be prominently displayed on the Covered Products, on the packing of the Covered Products, or on a placard, shelf tag, or sign provided that the statement 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 prior to sale. If the warning statement is displayed on the Covered Products' packaging, it must be in a type size no smaller than the largest type size used for other consumer information on the product. In no case shall a warning statement displayed on the Covered Products' packaging appear in a type size smaller than 6-point type. If the Covered Products' packaging contains consumer information in a foreign language, a

warning statement in that language is required. The same warning shall be posted on any websites under the exclusive control of GMI where Covered Products are sold into California. Such warning shall constitute compliance with Proposition 65 with respect to the Listed Chemical in the Covered Products for any Covered Products in existing inventory that had not been reformulated and were distributed and/or sold by GMI or any of the Releasees after the Effective Date. There shall be no obligation for GMI to provide a warning for Covered Products that entered the stream of commerce prior to the Effective Date, and the Section 4 release applies to all such Covered Products.

(i) Changes in Warning Regulations or Statutes

In the event that the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment promulgates one or more regulations requiring or permitting Proposition 65 warning text and/or methods of transmission applicable to the Covered Products and the chemical at issue, which are different than those set forth above, GMI shall be entitled to use, at its discretion, such other warning text and/or method of transmission without being deemed in breach of this Agreement. If regulations or legislation are enacted providing that Proposition 65 warnings as to mercury in this product are no longer required, a lack of warning by GMI will not thereafter be a breach of this Agreement. GMI shall instruct any third-party website to which it sells its Covered Products to include the same warning as a condition of selling the Covered Products.

**2.3 Grace Period for Existing Inventory of Covered Products**

The injunctive requirements of Section 2 shall not apply to Covered Products that are already in the stream of commerce as of the Effective Date, which Covered Products are expressly subject to the releases provided in Section 4.1. For the avoidance of doubt, Covered Products in the stream of commerce specifically include, but are not limited to, Covered Products in the process of manufacture.

**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 Notices or referred to in this Settlement Agreement, GMI agrees to pay three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) 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. Shall issue two separate checks for the initial civil penalty payment to (a) “OEHHA” and (b) Environmental Health Advocates, Inc. as follows:

- One payment of \$2,250.00 to OEHHA, due 14 (fourteen) days after the Effective Date.
- One payment of \$750.00 to EHA, due 14 (fourteen) days after the Effective Date.

All payments owed to OEHHA (EIN: 68-0284486), pursuant to this Section 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

All penalty payments owed to EHA shall be sent to:

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

## **2.2 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, GMI agrees to pay twenty three thousand dollars (\$23,000.00) to EHA and its counsel for all fees and costs incurred in investigating, bringing this matter the attention of GMI, and negotiating a settlement. This payment shall be payable to Entorno Law, LLP, and shall be delivered within 14

days of the Effective Date to:

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

### **3.3 Tax Documentation**

GMI 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 GMI cannot issue any settlement payments pursuant to Section 3.1 and 3.2 above until after GMI receives the requisite W-9 forms from EHA's counsel.

## **4. CLAIMS COVERED AND RELEASED**

### **4.1 EHA's Release of GMI**

This Settlement Agreement is a full, final, and binding resolution of all claims between EHA, on its own behalf and not on behalf of the public, and GMI for all claims that can 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 GMI and each of its respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities under common ownership, directors, officers, members, employees, attorneys, and any entity, including, but not limited to each entity to whom GMI directly or indirectly distributes or sells the Covered Products, including, but not limited to, its downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers (including but not limited to Balboa Market Holdings, LLC), franchisees, cooperative members and licensees ("Releasees"), based on the failure to warn about exposures to mercury required under Proposition 65 in the Covered Products manufactured, sold or distributed for sale in California by GMI before the Effective Date, as alleged in the Notice, or for any other reason.

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 GMI 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 mercury required under Proposition 65 in the Covered Products manufactured, distributed, sold or offered for sale by GMI, before the Effective Date.

#### **4.2 GMI's Release of EHA**

GMI, 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, otherwise seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter, or with respect to the Covered Products.

#### **4.3 California Civil Code Section 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 Covered Products will develop or be discovered. EHA on behalf of itself only, on one hand, and GMI on behalf of itself only, on the other hand, acknowledge that this Settlement Agreement is expressly intended to cover and include all such claims up through the Effective Date. The Parties acknowledge that the claims released in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 may include unknown claims, and nevertheless waive California Civil Code section 1542 as to any such unknown claims. California Civil Code section 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.**

EHA and GMI each acknowledge and understand the significance and consequences of this specific waiver of California Civil Code § 1542.

**5 PUBLIC BENEFIT**

It is GMI's understanding that the commitments it has agreed to herein, and actions to be taken by GMI under this Settlement Agreement 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 intent of GMI that to the extent any other private party serves a notice and/or initiates an action alleging a violation of Proposition 65 with respect to GMI's alleged failure to provide a warning concerning actual or alleged exposure to mercury prior to use of the Covered 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 Covered Products addressed in this Settlement Agreement, provided that GMI is in material compliance with this Settlement Agreement.

**6. 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.

**7. 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.

**8. ENFORCEMENT**

In any action to enforce the terms of this Settlement Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs.

**9. 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 GMI:

Serge Bauer  
Law Offices of Serge Bauer, P.C  
4500 North park Avenue, Suite 806  
Chevy Chase, MD 20815  
sbauer@bauerlaw.net

For EHA:

Noam Glick  
Entorno Law, LLP  
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.

**10. 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.

**11. 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).

**12. MODIFICATION**

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

**13. 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: 02/14/2024

Date: February 13, 2024

By:   
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
ADVOCATES, INC.

By:   
GMI TRADING LLC  
CEO: EDUARD SHNAYDER