

SETTLEMENT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Ecological Alliance, LLC and Bytech NY, Inc.

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Ecological Alliance, LLC ("Alliance"), on the one hand, and Bytech NY, Inc. ("Bytech"), on the other hand, with Alliance and Bytech collectively referred to as the "Parties."

1.2. General Allegations

Alliance alleges that Bytech manufactured and/or distributed and/or offered for sale in the State of California waterproof phone pouches that allegedly contain or Diisononyl phthalate [DINP] (the "Product") and that such sales have not included warnings pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, California Health & Safety Code sections 25249.6 *et seq.* ("Proposition 65"). California has identified and listed DINP under Proposition 65 as a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm.

1.3. Product Description

The Product that is covered by this Settlement Agreement is defined as waterproof phone pouches that allegedly contain DINP that Bytech has sold, offered for sale or distributed in California.

1.4. Notice of Violation

On May 21, 2023, Alliance served Bytech, Five Below, Inc., and the requisite public enforcement agencies eligible to initiate Proposition 65 actions on behalf of the People of the State of California with documents entitled "60-Day Notice of Violation" ("Notice") that provided Bytech and such public enforcers with notice that Bytech was allegedly in violation of

California Health & Safety Code section 25249.6 for failing to warn consumers and customers that the Product exposed users in California to DINP. To the best of the Parties' knowledge, no public enforcer has commenced or is diligently prosecuting the allegations set forth in the Notice.

1.5. No Admission

The Parties enter into this Settlement Agreement to settle disputed claims between them as set forth herein and in the Notice concerning Bytech's compliance with Proposition 65. Specifically, Bytech denies the material factual and legal allegations contained in Alliance's Notice and maintains that all products that it has manufactured, distributed or sold in California, including the Product, have been and are in compliance with Proposition 65 or any other statutory, regulatory, common law or equitable doctrine. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by Bytech 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 Bytech of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, such being specifically denied by Bytech. However, nothing in this section shall diminish or otherwise affect the obligations, responsibilities, and duties of Bytech 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 fully executed.

2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: WARNING OR REFORMULATION


2.1. Warning or Reformulation

No later than the sixty (60) days after the Effective Date (“the Compliance Date”), Bytech will not purchase Products for sale into California unless (1) the Products are accompanied by a warning as described in Section 2.2 below, or (2) contain no more than 1,000 ppm DINP. The requirements set forth in this Section 2 shall apply only to Products that are distributed, marketed, sold or shipped for sale in the State of California, and shall not apply to Products that are already in the stream of commerce as of the Compliance Date or that Bytech places into the stream of commerce as of the Compliance Date.

2.2. Warning Language

Where required, Bytech shall provide Proposition 65 warnings as follows:

(a) Bytech may use any of the following warning statements in full compliance with this Section:

(1)  **WARNING:** This product can expose you to chemicals including Diisononyl phthalate [DINP], which is known to the State of California to cause cancer. For more info go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.

(2)  **WARNING:** Cancer – www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.

(b) Where the sign, label or shelf tag for the product 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”.

(c) The requirements for warnings, set forth in subsection (a) above are imposed pursuant to the terms of this Settlement Agreement. The Parties recognize that these are not the exclusive methods of providing a warning under Proposition 65 and its implementing regulations.

(d) If Proposition 65 warnings for DINP or the Product should no longer be required, Bytech shall have no further obligations pursuant to this Settlement Agreement.

(e) In the event that the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment promulgates one or more regulations requiring or permitting warning text and/or methods of transmission different than those set forth above, Bytech shall be entitled to use, at their discretion, such other warning text and/or method of transmission without being deemed in breach of this Agreement.

(f) Foreign Languages. Additionally, if a Covered Product's labeling is provided in a language other than English, the warning will be provided in that language in addition to English.

(g) Online Sales. If Bytech sells Products via an internet website it controls 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 California purchaser prior to purchase during the checkout process; or (d) via a hyperlink taking the customer to a separate page containing the warning language, provided that the hyperlink appears on the same page as either the product description or product

price are displayed, or appears prior to completion of the sale at checkout.

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. PENALTIES PURSUANT TO HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.7(b)

In settlement of all the claims referred to in this Settlement Agreement, Bytech shall pay a total of \$200 in civil penalties in accordance with this Section. The penalty payment will be allocated in accordance with California Health & Safety Code section 25249.12(c)(1) & (d), with 75% of the funds remitted to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("OEHHA") and the remaining 25% of the penalty remitted to Alliance. Alliance's counsel shall be responsible for delivering OEHHA's portion of any penalty payment made under this Settlement Agreement.

4. REIMBURSEMENT OF FEES AND COSTS

The Parties reached an accord on the compensation due to Alliance and its counsel under the private attorney general doctrine and principles of contract law. Under these legal principles, Bytech shall reimburse Alliance's counsel for fees and costs, incurred as a result of investigating and bringing this matter to Bytech's attention. Bytech shall pay Alliance's counsel \$9,800 for all attorneys' fees, expert and investigation fees, and related costs associated with this matter and the Notice.

5. PAYMENT INFORMATION

By July 25, 2024, Bytech shall make a total payment of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the civil penalties and attorney's by check and sent to Plaintiff's counsel Custodio & Dubey LLP:

Bank: Bank of America, N.A.

Routing No.: 026009593

Account No.: 325149324377

Beneficiary: Custodio & Dubey LLP

Other than this payment, each side is to bear its own attorneys' fees and costs. Custodio & Dubey LLP shall be solely responsible for dispersing the payments as required by Sections 3 and 4 of this Agreement.

6. RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS

6.1. Release of Bytech, Downstream Customers and Upstream Vendors

In further consideration of the promises and agreements herein contained, and for the payments to be made pursuant to Sections 3 and 4 above, Alliance, on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and/or assignees, hereby waives all rights to institute or participate in, directly or indirectly, any form of legal action and releases all claims relating to the Product, including, without limitation, all actions, and causes of action, in law or in equity, suits, liabilities, demands, obligations, damages, costs, fines, penalties, losses or expenses (including, but not limited to, investigation fees, expert fees and attorneys' fees) of any nature whatsoever, whether known or unknown, fixed or contingent (collectively "Claims"), against (a) Bytech, (b) each of Bytech's downstream distributors, wholesalers, vendors, licensors, licensees, auctioneers, retailers, franchisees, dealers, shareholders, cooperative

members, customers, owners, purchasers, users, and (c) Bytech's parent companies, corporate affiliates, subsidiaries, and their respective officers, directors, attorneys, representatives, shareholders, agents, and employees, and sister and parent entities. (collectively "Releasees").

Alliance also, in its capacity, on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assignees and *not* in its representative capacity, provides a general 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 any nature, character or kind, known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, against Bytech and the Releasees. Alliance acknowledges that it is familiar with California Civil Code section 1542, which provides 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.

Alliance, in its capacity only, and on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assignees expressly waives and relinquishes any and all rights and benefits which it may have under, or which may be conferred on it by the provisions of California Civil Code section 1542 as well as under any other state or federal statute or common law principle of similar effect, to the fullest extent that it may lawfully waive such rights or benefits pertaining to the released matters.

6.2. Bytech's Release of Alliance

Bytech waives any and all claims against Alliance, its attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken or statements made (or those that could have been taken or made) by Alliance and its attorneys and other representatives, whether in the course of investigating

claims or otherwise seeking enforcement of Proposition 65 against it in this matter, with respect to the Product as related to Proposition 65 only.

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. In the event that Proposition 65 is repealed or is otherwise rendered inapplicable by reason of law generally, or as to the Product, then Bytech shall have no further obligations pursuant to this Settlement Agreement.

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; (ii.) email; or (iii) overnight courier on any party by the other party at the following addresses:

For Bytech: Jeffrey Dweck
 The Law Firm Of Jeffrey S. Dweck, P.C.
 43 West 33rd Street, Suite 304
 New York, NY 10001

For Alliance: Vineet Dubey, Esq.
 Custodio & Dubey LLP
 445 S. Figueroa St., Suite 2520
 Los Angeles, CA 90071

Any 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; FACSIMILE/E-SIGNATURES

This Settlement Agreement may be executed in counterparts and by facsimile or e-signatures, 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 SECTION 25249.7(f)**

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

11. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT**



This Settlement Agreement contains the sole and entire agreement and understanding of the Parties with respect to the entire subject matter hereof, and all related prior discussions, negotiations, commitments and understandings. No other agreements, oral or otherwise, exist to bind either of the Parties.

12. **MODIFICATION**

This Settlement Agreement may be modified only by a written agreement signed by 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: July 20, 2024	Date: July 20, 2024
By: 	By: 
On Behalf of Ecological Alliance, LLC	On Behalf of Bytech NY, Inc.