

001/199-

FILED
BUSINESS OFFICE 13

1 CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS, LLP
MARK D. POTTER, ESQ., SBN 166317
2 RUSSELL C. HANDY, ESQ., SBN 195058
JAMES R. BOYD, ESQ., SBN 175597
3 STEVE WEDEL, ESQ. SBN 214908
P.O. Box 34606
4 San Diego, CA 92163-4606
(619) 291-7593
5 Fax: (619) 725-0720

2002 JUN 25 P 1:33

LT

6 Attorney for Plaintiff, CHRIS LANGER,

8481 01 07 GIC791242 06/26/02 09:16
02 001 New Civil \$199.00

8
9
10 IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
11 IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

12 CHRIS LANGER,)
13) Case No.: **GIC 791242**
14 Plaintiff,)
15) **COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES AND**
16 v.) **INJUNCTIVE RELIEF FOR VIOLATIONS**
17) **OF: UNRUH CIVIL RIGHTS ACT;**
18) **CALIFORNIA'S DISABLED PERSON ACT;**
19) **NEGLIGENCE; CALIFORNIA'S UNFAIR**
20) **BUSINESS PRACTICE ACT.**
21) **DEMAND FOR JURY**
22)
23)
24)
25)
26)
27)
28)

20 Plaintiff CHRIS LANGER, (hereinafter referred to as
21 "Plaintiff") complains of SAMIR H. SOMO; NADA H. SOMO, and DOES 1
22 through 10, inclusive, (hereinafter referred to as "Defendants") and
23 alleges as follows:

24 **INTRODUCTION:**

25 1. This is a Civil Rights action for discrimination against
26 persons with physical disabilities, of which Plaintiff is a member
27 of said class, for failure to remove architectural barriers
28

ORIGINAL
ACCOUNTING

1 structural in nature at Defendants' place of business, located at
2 431 N. Highland Ave., National City, California, a place of public
3 accommodation; and for failure to modify practices and or policies
4 in order to accommodate, thereby discriminatorily denying Plaintiff
5 and the class of other similarly situated persons with physical
6 disabilities access to, the full and equal enjoyment of, opportunity
7 to participate in, and benefit from, the goods, facilities,
8 services, and accommodations thereof.

9 2. Plaintiff seeks injunctive relief and damages for
10 violations of civil rights and for damages flowing from such
11 violations.

12 **PARTIES:**

13 3. Plaintiff is a California resident with physical
14 disabilities who uses a wheelchair to travel about in public.

15 4. Defendants, SAMIR H. SOMO; NADA H. SOMO, and DOES 1 through
16 10, inclusive (hereinafter alternatively referred to collectively as
17 "Defendants"), are the owners and operators, lessors and/or lessees,
18 or agents of the owners, lessors and/or lessees, and/or alter egos,
19 franchisers and/or franchisees, of the building and/or buildings
20 which constitute a public facility in and of itself, occupied by the
21 above described defendants, and subject to the requirements of
22 federal and state law requiring full and equal access to public
23 accommodations and facilities.

24 5. Plaintiff does not know the true names of Defendants, their
25 business capacities, their ownership connection to the property and
26 business, or their relative responsibilities in causing the access
27 violations herein complained of, and alleges a joint venture and
28 common enterprise by all such Defendants. Plaintiff is informed and

1 believes that each of the Defendants herein, including DOES 1
2 through 10, inclusive, is responsible in some capacity for the
3 events herein alleged, or is a necessary party for obtaining
4 appropriate relief. Plaintiff will seek leave to amend when the true
5 names, capacities, connections, and responsibilities of the
6 Defendants and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive, are ascertained.

7 **PRELIMINARY FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS:**

8 6. Defendants are or were at the time of the incident the
9 owners and operators, lessors and lessees of the public facility,
10 located at 431 N. Highland Ave., National City, California. The
11 public accommodation, its path of travel, parking, restrooms and its
12 other facilities are each a "public accommodation or facility"
13 subject to the requirements of state and federal law. On information
14 and belief, each such facility has, since July 1, 1970, undergone
15 "alterations, structural repairs and additions," each of which has
16 subjected the public accommodations, and each of their facilities to
17 handicapped access requirements per the Americans with Disabilities
18 Act Access Guidelines (ADAAG) and Title 24 of California's Code of
19 Regulations.

20 7. On at least once occasion within the statutory period
21 preceding the filing of this complaint, Plaintiff was an invitee and
22 customer at the subject public accommodation.

23 8. During Plaintiff's visit, the subject public accommodation
24 exhibited various violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act
25 Accessibility Guidelines ("ADAAG") and Title 24 of the California
26 Code of Regulations including but not limited to: there was a lack
27 of properly configured disabled parking; a lack of van accessible
28 designated disabled parking; and inaccessible merchandise aisles.

1 9. On information and belief, other portions of the facility
2 were improperly inaccessible for use by persons with physical
3 disabilities.

4 10. On information and belief, the facilities continue to the
5 date of filing this complaint to deny equal access to Plaintiff and
6 other persons with physical disabilities.

7 11. As a result of the inaccessible facilities, Plaintiff was
8 humiliated, embarrassed and frustrated, suffering emotional
9 injuries. Moreover, as a result of the inaccessible facilities,
10 Plaintiff, suffered bodily and physical injury.

11 12. Plaintiff would like to return and use the Defendants'
12 public accommodations but because of Defendants' violations,
13 Plaintiff and other persons with physical disabilities are unable to
14 use public facilities such as those owned and operated by Defendants
15 on a "full and equal" basis unless such facility is in compliance
16 with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act
17 Accessibility Guidelines and state accessibility law as pled herein.
18 Plaintiff has, therefore, been deterred from returning and using the
19 Defendants' public accommodations.

20 13. Plaintiff is informed and believes and therefore alleges
21 that Defendants and each of them (1) caused the subject improved
22 real properties which constitute the subject public accommodation to
23 be constructed, altered and maintained in such a manner that persons
24 with physical disabilities were denied full and equal access to,
25 within and throughout said improved real property(s); (2) that the
26 Defendants have had actual and constructive notice that the
27 facilities were not legally accessible to persons with disabilities;
28 (3) that despite being informed of such effect on Plaintiff and

1 other persons with physical disabilities due to the lack of
2 accessible facilities, Defendants, and each of them, knowingly and
3 willfully refused to take any steps to rectify the situation and to
4 provide full and equal access for Plaintiff and other persons with
5 physical disabilities to the subject public accommodation. Said
6 defendants, and each of them, have continued such practices, in
7 conscious disregard for the rights and safety of Plaintiff and other
8 persons with physical disabilities. Said conduct, with knowledge of
9 the effect it was and is having on Plaintiff and other persons with
10 physical disabilities, constitutes despicable conduct in conscious
11 disregard of the rights and safety of Plaintiff and of other
12 similarly situated persons, justifying the imposition of punitive
13 and exemplary damages per Civil Code section 3294.

14 **I. FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF THE UNRUH CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**
15 (On behalf of Plaintiff and Against All Defendants) (Cal Civ §
51 et seq.)

16 14. Plaintiff repleads and incorporates by reference, as if
17 fully set forth again herein, the allegations contained in all prior
18 paragraphs of this complaint.

19 15. California Civil Code § 52 provides that a party that
20 discriminates against a plaintiff in violation of Civ. Code § 51
21 shall be liable for actual damages, up to three times actual damages
22 but not less than \$1000 for each such offense, and any attorney's
23 fees incurred by the plaintiff.

24 **Count One:**

25 16. The Defendants have not ensured that their facilities
26 comply with Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, the
27 California Building Code as it applies to physical access for
28 persons with disabilities and failed to ensure that disabled persons

1 have "full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities,
2 privileges, or services" to the facilities identified above.

3 Count Two:

4 17. The Defendants have not complied with the Americans with
5 Disabilities Act of 1990.

6
7 **II. SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA'S DISABLED**
8 **PERSONS ACT, (On Behalf of Plaintiff and Against All**
9 **Defendants) (California Civil Code § 54 et seq.)**

10 18. Plaintiff repleads and incorporates by reference as if
11 fully set forth again herein, the allegations contained in all prior
12 paragraphs of this complaint and incorporates them herein as if
13 separately repled.

14 19. California Civil Code §55 provides that a person aggrieved
15 under §54 of the Civil Code may bring an action to enjoin such
16 violation and shall be entitled to recover reasonable attorney's
17 fees.

18 Count One:

19 20. The Defendants have not ensured that their facilities
20 comply with Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, the
21 California Building Code as it applies to physical access for
22 persons with disabilities and have failed to ensure that disabled
23 persons have full and equal access to public accommodations and/or
24 other places that the general public is invited and that disabled
25 persons enjoy the same accommodations, advantages, facilities, and
26 privileges to the facilities identified above.

27 Count Two:

28 21. The Defendants have not complied with the Americans with
Disabilities Act of 1990.

1 22. Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for relief and damages as
2 hereinafter stated.

3 **III. THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION: NEGLIGENCE**

4 (On behalf of the Plaintiff and Against All Defendants)

5 23. Plaintiff repleads and incorporates by reference, as if
6 fully set forth again herein, the allegations contained in all prior
7 paragraphs of this complaint.

8 24. Defendants had a duty to exercise ordinary care, i.e.,
9 comply with the various accessibility laws and ensure that their
10 property was safely configured.

11 25. Defendants failed to exercise ordinary care in that they
12 failed to ensure that their facilities complied with the
13 accessibility guidelines or that their facilities were configured to
14 promote safe and effective use by persons with wheelchairs.

15 26. As the actual and proximate result of Defendants' failure
16 to exercise ordinary care, Plaintiff suffered damages in an amount
17 to be determined by proof.

18 27. Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for relief and damages and
19 relief as hereinafter stated.

20 **IV. FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA'S UNFAIR**
21 **BUSINESS PRACTICES ACT (On behalf of the Public and Against All**
22 **Defendants) (Cal. Bus. & Prof. § 17200 et seq.)**

23 28. Plaintiff repleads and incorporates by reference, as if
24 fully set forth again herein, the allegations contained in all prior
25 paragraphs of this complaint.

26 29. In addition to the access violations described above,
27 Defendants' facilities are in violation of California and Federal
28 law in that they do not provide required access for disabled

1 persons.

2 30. Defendants' acts and omissions alleged herein are a
3 violation of both statutory requirements and public policy and,
4 therefore, constitute a violation of Business and Professions Code
5 sections 17200 et seq.

6 31. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself/herself and the general
7 public, seeks injunctive relief requiring Defendants to remedy the
8 disability access violations present at their facilities.

9 32. Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for relief and damages and
10 relief as hereinafter stated.

11 **PRAYER:**

12 Wherefore, Plaintiff prays that this court award damages and
13 provide relief as follows:

14 1. For injunctive relief, compelling Defendants to comply with
15 the Unruh Civil Rights Act, and California's Disabled Person Act,
16 which order will include the removal of barriers and the
17 implementation of reasonable modifications in policies, practice,
18 eligibility criteria and procedures so as to afford full access to
19 the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and
20 accommodations being offered.

21 2. General, Special and Penalty damages in an amount to be
22 determined by proof;

23 3. Reasonable attorneys' fees, litigation expenses and costs of
24 suit, pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code §§ 52,55, and Cal. Civ. Proc. §
25 1021.5;

26 ///

27 ///

28

1 4. For such other and further relief as the court may deem
2 proper.

3 Dated: April 23, 2002

CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS, LLP

5 By: 

6 MARK D. POTTER
7 RUSSELL C. HANDY
8 JAMES R. BOYD
Attorneys for Plaintiff

9 DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

10 Plaintiff hereby demands a jury for all claims for which a jury
11 is permitted.

12 Dated: April 23, 2002

CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS, LLP

13 By: 

14 MARK D. POTTER
15 RUSSELL C. HANDY
16 JAMES R. BOYD
17 Attorneys for Plaintiff
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

1 George V. Paluso, Esq. (CSB # 57962)
2 **PALUSO & SCEPER**
3 Attorneys at Law
4 1010 Second Avenue, Suite 1350
5 San Diego, California 92101-4967
6 Telephone: (619) 232-8917
7 Facsimile: (619) 232-2704

8 Attorneys for Defendants,
9 SAMIR H. SOMO and NADA H. SOMO
10 (1) (2)

FILED
CIVIL BUSINESS OFFICE 10
CENTRAL DIVISION

2002 SEP 11 P 3:51

LAD BERG
COURT
CITY CA
\$166.01 07 GIC791242 09/12/02 10:54
02 040 1st Paper Fee \$392.00

11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
SAN DIEGO JUDICIAL DISTRICT

CHRIS LANGER,

Plaintiff,

v.

SAMIR H. SOMO and NADA H. SOMO,
and DOES 1 to 10, inclusive.

Defendants.

) Case No. GIC 791242

) **ANSWER TO COMPLAINT**

) I/C Judge: Hon. Charles R. Hayes
) Dept.: 66

) Date Complaint Filed: June 23, 2002

COMES NOW SAMIR H. SOMO and NADA H. SOMO, severing themselves from all other Defendants, to answer the Complaint on file herein as follows:

Defendants, in answer to the Unverified Complaint on file herein, and by virtue of the provision of Section 431.30(d) of the Code of Civil Procedure, now file their General Denial to the Unverified Complaint. In answering all the allegations in the Unverified Complaint, these answering Defendants generally and specifically deny each and every allegation thereof; AND BY WAY OF DEFENSE TO SAID COMPLAINT ALLEGE:

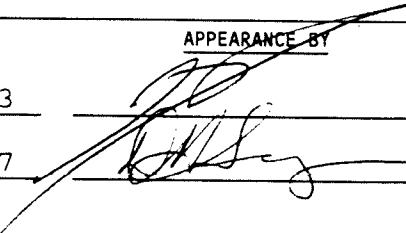
FOR A FIRST AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE

Plaintiff's alleged Complaint, and each purported cause of action thereof, fails to state sufficient facts to constitute a cause of action against these answering Defendants.

///

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

CALENDAR NO.

NUMBER GIC791242	COMPLAINT DATE 06/24/02	HEARING DATE 01/13/03	HEARING TIME 09:30AM	DEPT 4	COURT USE ONLY F I L E D STEPHEN THUNBERG Clerk of the Superior Court JAN 13 2003 By: LEE RYAN, Deputy
JUDGE/COMMISSIONER HON. J. MICHAEL BOLLMAN			CLERK LEE RYAN		
REPORTER <i>Glenna Simpson</i>			CSR # <i>2441</i>		
P.O. BOX 120128, SAN DIEGO, CA 92112-0128					
PLAINTIFF/PETITIONER CHRIS LANGER			DEFENDANT/RESPONDENT SAMIR H SOMO ,et al.		
The above matter came on for hearing with the below appearances for:					
SPECIAL SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE					
ATTORNEY OF RECORD		PHONE		APPEARANCE BY	
MARK D POTTER (P)		619-291-7593			
DUANE SCOPER					
GEORGE V. PALUSO (D)		619-232-8917			
(add'l signatures - use attached sheet)					

IT IS ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

Settlement conference held. Confidential settlement read into the record.

CC 1542

CC 16046 enforcement

45 day dismissal calendar.

ESTIMATED TRIAL TIME: _____ day(s).

JURY / NON-JURY

Ordered dismissed with _____ without _____ prejudice.

IT IS SO ORDERED:

Dated: 01/13/03

J Michael Bollman

 JUDGE/COMMISSIONER OF THE SUPERIOR COURT