

001/19900A

1 CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS, ^{CITIZEN} 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

6 Attorney for Plaintiff, CHRIS LANGER,
7

0837 01 07 610797223 10/02/02 09:12
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,

) Case No.: **GIC 797223**

13 Plaintiff,

) **COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES AND**
) **INJUNCTIVE RELIEF FOR VIOLATIONS**
) **OF: UNRUH CIVIL RIGHTS ACT;**
) **NEGLIGENCE; CALIFORNIA'S UNFAIR**
) **BUSINESS PRACTICE ACT.**

14 v.

15 ELKHORN RANCH, INC.; CHRISTA
16 FORD, and DOES 1 through 10,
17 inclusive

) **DEMAND FOR JURY**

18 Defendants.
19

20 Plaintiff CHRIS LANGER, (hereinafter referred to as
21 "Plaintiff") complains of ELKHORN RANCH, INC.; CHRISTA FORD, and
22 DOES 1 through 10, inclusive, (hereinafter referred to as
23 "Defendants") and alleges as follows:
24

25 **INTRODUCTION:**

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

ORIGINATING

1 structural in nature at Defendants' place of business, located at
2 6065 Fairmount Ave., San Diego, 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, ELKHORN RANCH, INC.; CHRISTA FORD, and DOES 1
16 through 10, inclusive (hereinafter alternatively referred to
17 collectively as "Defendants"), are the owners and operators, lessors
18 and/or lessees, or agents of the owners, lessors and/or lessees,
19 and/or alter egos, franchisers and/or franchisees, of the building
20 and/or buildings which constitute a public facility in and of
21 itself, occupied by the above described defendants, and subject to
22 the requirements of federal and state law requiring full and equal
23 access to public 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 6065 Fairmount Ave., San Diego, California. The public
11 accommodation, its path of travel, parking, restrooms and its other
12 facilities are each a "public accommodation or facility" subject to
13 the requirements of state and federal law. On information and
14 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; and a lack of van
28 accessible designated disabled parking.

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. Defendants knew their facilities were inaccessible and
12 continued to maintain these facilities in an inaccessible condition
13 and in doing so, knowingly continued to violate and interfere with
14 the rights of disabled persons including Plaintiff. Such conduct by
15 defendants is despicable, and was carried on by defendant with a
16 willful and conscious disregard for the rights of disabled persons,
17 including Plaintiff.

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

27 14. Plaintiff is informed and believes and therefore alleges
28 that Defendants and each of them (1) caused the subject improved

1 real properties which constitute the subject public accommodation to
2 be constructed, altered and maintained in such a manner that persons
3 with physical disabilities were denied full and equal access to,
4 within and throughout said improved real property(s); (2) that the
5 Defendants have had actual and constructive notice that the
6 facilities were not legally accessible to persons with disabilities;
7 (3) that despite being informed of such effect on Plaintiff and
8 other persons with physical disabilities due to the lack of
9 accessible facilities, Defendants, and each of them, knowingly and
10 willfully refused to take any steps to rectify the situation and to
11 provide full and equal access for Plaintiff and other persons with
12 physical disabilities to the subject public accommodation. Said
13 defendants, and each of them, have continued such practices, in
14 conscious disregard for the rights and safety of Plaintiff and other
15 persons with physical disabilities. Said conduct, with knowledge of
16 the effect it was and is having on Plaintiff and other persons with
17 physical disabilities, constitutes despicable conduct in conscious
18 disregard of the rights and safety of Plaintiff and of other
19 similarly situated persons, justifying the imposition of punitive
20 and exemplary damages per Civil Code section 3294.

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

23 15. 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 16. California Civil Code § 52 provides that a party that
27 discriminates against a plaintiff in violation of Civ. Code § 51
28 shall be liable for actual damages, up to three times actual damages

1 but not less than \$4000 for each such offense, and any attorney's
2 fees incurred by the plaintiff.

3 **Count One:**

4 17. The Defendants have not ensured that their facilities
5 comply with Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, the
6 California Building Code as it applies to physical access for
7 persons with disabilities and failed to ensure that disabled persons
8 have "full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities,
9 privileges, or services" to the facilities identified above.

10 **Count Two:**

11 18. The Defendants have not complied with the Americans with
12 Disabilities Act of 1990.

13 **II. SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION: NEGLIGENCE**

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

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

18 20. Defendants had a duty to exercise ordinary care, i.e.,
19 comply with the various accessibility laws and ensure that their
20 property was safely configured.

21 21. Defendants failed to exercise ordinary care in that they
22 failed to ensure that their facilities complied with the
23 accessibility guidelines or that their facilities were configured to
24 promote safe and effective use by persons with wheelchairs.

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

28

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

3 **III. THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA'S UNFAIR**
4 **BUSINESS PRACTICES ACT (On behalf of the Public and Against All**
5 **Defendants) (Cal. Bus. & Prof. § 17200 et seq.)**

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

9 25. In addition to the access violations described above,
10 Defendants' facilities are in violation of California and Federal
11 law in that they do not provide required access for disabled
12 persons.

13 26. Defendants' acts and omissions alleged herein are a
14 violation of both statutory requirements and public policy and,
15 therefore, constitute a violation of Business and Professions Code
16 sections 17200 et seq.

17 27. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself/herself and the general
18 public, seeks injunctive relief requiring Defendants to remedy the
19 disability access violations present at their facilities.

20 28. Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for relief and damages and
21 relief as hereinafter stated.

22 **PRAYER:**

23 Wherefore, Plaintiff prays that this court award damages and
24 provide relief as follows:

25 1. For injunctive relief, compelling Defendants to comply with
26 the Unruh Civil Rights Act.

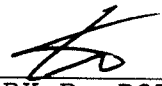
27 2. General and Special damages in an amount to be determined by
28 proof;

1 3. Reasonable attorneys' fees, litigation expenses and costs of
2 suit, pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code §§ 52, and Cal. Civ. Proc. §
3 1021.5;

4 4. For Punitive Damages pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code Section
5 3294(c)(1);

6 5. For such other and further relief as the court may deem
7 proper.


8 Dated: August 20, 2002 CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS, LLP
9

10 By: 
11 MARK D. POTTER
12 RUSSELL C. HANDY
13 JAMES R. BOYD
Attorneys for Plaintiff

14 **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

15 Plaintiff hereby demands a jury for all claims for which a jury
16 is permitted.

17
18 Dated: August 20, 2002 CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS, LLP
19

20 By: 
21 MARK D. POTTER
22 RUSSELL C. HANDY
23 JAMES R. BOYD
24 Attorneys for Plaintiff
25
26
27
28

1 JENNIFER M. KELLY, ESQ., State Bar No. 157391
EVE M. WENGLER, ESQ., State Bar No. 216359
2 HILDING KIPNIS LYON & KELLY
11975 El Camino Real, Suite 200
3 San Diego, California 92130
Telephone: (858) 623-1111
4 Facsimile: (858) 623-9114
5 Attorneys for Defendant ELKHORN RANCH, INC.,
a California corporation

CIVIL
MAY - 7 P 501
USA

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

11 CHRIS LANGER,) Case No. GIC797223
12 Plaintiffs,) ~~GENERAL DENIAL OF DEFENDANT~~
13 v.) ELKHORN RANCH, INC.
14 ELKHORN RANCH, INC.; CHRISTA FORD;)
and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive,)
15 Defendants.)
16)
17)

18 For itself alone, and severing itself from all other defendants,
19 Defendant ELKHORN RANCH, INC., a California corporation (hereafter,
20 "Defendant"), answers the unverified complaint of Plaintiff CHRIS
21 LANGER ("Plaintiff") on file herein as follows:

22 1. Inasmuch as the complaint is not verified, and under the
23 provisions of California Code of Civil Procedure Section 431.30(d),
24 Defendant denies generally and specifically each, every and all of the
25 allegations contained in the complaint, and each alleged cause of
26 action contained therein, including a denial of all sums and amounts
27 alleged, to be alleged, or otherwise.

28 / / /

GENERAL DENIAL TO COMPLAINT

1 Malcolm D. Schick - Attorney Bar No. 118978
Diana C. Guzman - Attorney Bar No. 201745
2 Lynne A. Pearson - Attorney Bar No. 126156
3 **GRAY & PROUTY**
1761 Hotel Circle South, Suite 240
San Diego, California 92108-3318
4 Tel: (619) 718-9790; Fax: (619) 718-9797

FILED
CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT OFFICE 10
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
NOV 25 2 34
049
2142
LW

5 Attorneys for Defendant
6 CRISTA FORD

3793 01 07 GIC797223 11/26/02 14:02
02 040 1st Paper Fee \$214.20

8 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
9 COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

11 CHRIS LANGER) Case No. GIC797223
12)
12 Plaintiff,) JUDGE: Sheridan Reed
13 vs.) DEPT.: 68
14)
14 ELKHORN RANCH, INC.; CHRISTA)
FORD, and DOES 1 through 20,)
15 inclusive,) Complaint Filed: Oct. 1, 2002
16 Defendants.) DEFENDANT, CRISTA FORD'S
ANSWER TO PLAINTIFF'S
COMPLAINT

17
18
19 COMES NOW, defendant CRISTA FORD (erroneously sued herein as
20 "CHRISTA FORD"), severing herself from the other defendants named
21 in the Complaint, answers the Complaint on file and admit, denies
22 and alleges as follows:

23 1.
24 This answering defendant denies all the allegations generally
25 and specifically contained in the Complaint and each cause of
26 action as it applies to this answering defendant. Specifically,
27 defendant denies that it is liable to the plaintiff under the
28 theories or in the manners set forth in the Complaint.