

Line in the Sand

A Newport Beach Political Action Committee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 12, 2017

Contact:

Dennis Baker, President: 949-274-3226

Line in the Sand Appeals Anti-SLAPP Motion Denial

Newport Beach, CA: Line in the Sand Political Action Committee (LITS) filed an appeal on June 7 to overturn Superior Court Judge Glass's denial of LITS's anti-SLAPP motion in the lawsuit brought by Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA) against the City of Newport Beach with LITS as a Real Party in Interest.

The OCMA lawsuit seeks to set aside the Museum House referendum petition due to a font-size dispute about some of the petition's 1,034 pages, despite the fact that not one signer complained of the font size to LITS.

LITS's anti-SLAPP motion seeks to dismiss the OCMA lawsuit as a "Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation" (SLAPP). SLAPP lawsuits like this are used as a strategic maneuver by corporations claiming restraint of business. They are typically brought against individuals and activist groups in order to burden them with the cost of legal defense and ultimately silence them.

LITS, as a named Real Party in Interest in the OCMA lawsuit, asked the court for relief on the basis that the suit was a compelling example of a SLAPP lawsuit. The judge denied LITS's motion, and LITS is now appealing that decision.

OCMA and The Related Companies spent over \$500,000 in their failed attempt to defeat the referendum, over five times the amount spent by LITS. In the end, Newport Beach voters prevailed, collecting nearly 14,000 signatures on the petition in just under two weeks during the busy holiday season.

In addition to the referendum preparation expenses paid for by LITS donors (cash and a one-time in-kind contribution), LITS has incurred significant legal expenses to defend against the subsequent OCMA lawsuit, which attempts to invalidate the intent and the right of 14,000 voters to referend a City Council decision.

LITS considers the appeal of the latest court ruling on its anti-SLAPP motion to be important in terms of standing up for all residents who participated in the referendum and believe they should have a say in matters threatening their quality of life.

For more information about Line in the Sand, visit LineInTheSandPAC.com.

##