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11	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA				
12	IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF ORANGE - CIVIL COMPLEX CENTER				
13	Hon. William D. Claster, Coordination Trial Judge				
14	11011. William D. Claste	i, coordination	That Judge		
15	Coordination Proceeding Special Title (Rule 3.550)	) Case No. JO	CCP 5167		
16	GHOST GUNNER FIREARMS CASES		COURT OF CALIFORNIA OF ORANGE		
17	Included actions:	\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \	30-2019-01111797		
18	Cardenas v. Ghost Gunner, Inc. dba	\	COURT OF CALIFORNIA OF SAN BERNARDINO		
19	GhoseGunner.net, et al.	١	CIVDS193452		
20	McFadyen, et al. v. Ghost Gunner, Inc. dba		NT JUGGERNAUT		
21	GhostGunner.net, et al.	\(\) MOTION	L, INC.'S NOTICE OF AND MOTION FOR		
22		\( \text{CALIFOR} \)	NS PURSUANT TO NIA CODE OF CIVIL		
23		) MEMORA	JRE SECTION 128.7; AND NDUM OF POINTS AND		
24 25		j –	TIES IN SUPPORT THEREOF		
26		) Res ID: 738			
27		Date: Time:	September 16, 2022 9:00 a.m.		
28		<b>Dept.:</b>	CX104		
	5351096				
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	NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR SANCTIONS				

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## TO ALL PARTIES AND THEIR RESPECTIVE ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on September 16, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard in Department CX104 of the Orange County Superior Court located at 751 W. Santa Ana Blvd. Santa Ana, CA 92701, Defendant JUGGERNAUT TACTICAL, INC. (hereinafter "Juggernaut Tactical") will and hereby do move this Court for an order dismissing Juggernaut Tactical from this case, and awarding attorneys' fees and costs against Plaintiffs pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure sections 128.7.

This Motion is made on the grounds that Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint (hereinafter the "AC") contains numerous knowingly false and/or inaccurate claims, and Plaintiffs have refused to amend the AC despite being aware of the false and/or inaccurate claims.

This motion is based on this Notice, the Memorandum of Points and Authorities, the Declaration of Howard Schilsky and corresponding attachments, filed herewith; upon the records and files in this action, and upon such further evidence and argument as may be presented prior to or at the time of hearing on the motion.

Date: August 17, 2022

EDLIN GALLAGHER HUIE + BLUM

By: <u>/s/ Michael Gallagher</u>

MICHAEL E. GALLAGHER Attorneys for Defendant JUGGERNAUT TACTICAL INC.

RENZULLI LAW FIRM, LLP

By: <u>/s/ Howard Schilsky</u>

HOWARD B. SCHILSKY (*Pro Hac Vice*) CHRISTOPHER RENZULLI (*Pro Hac Vice*)

Defendant Juggernaut Tactical, Inc. ("Juggernaut Tactical") respectfully submits this Memorandum of Points and Authorities in support of its motion for sanctions pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 128.7, seeking dismissal of this action as against it, attorneys' fees and costs, and other penalties as this Court deems warranted against Plaintiffs and their counsel. For the reasons set forth below and in the record before the Court, Juggernaut Tactical respectfully requests this motion be granted in its entirety.

## I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Plaintiffs have been notified and informed through their counsel of incontrovertible evidence that the products they claim caused their injuries were not manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. (*See* Exhibit A, the Report of Mike Shain ("Shain Report") and Declaration of Zackary King ("King Dec.")). Plaintiffs, however, knowingly and willfully disregard this proof, and continue in their baseless allegations against Juggernaut Tactical. Despite being provided with indisputable proof of Juggernaut Tactical's non-liability, Plaintiffs nevertheless named it as a defendant in the Amended Complaint, and refuse to voluntarily dismiss it as a defendant. Simply put, an inspection of the subject firearms and firearm parts confirmed that it is an *impossibility* that the products at issue were manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. Plaintiffs and their counsel know this, yet they persist in their willfully blind pursuit of baseless and misplaced claims against Juggernaut Tactical.

Plaintiffs and their counsel's conduct warrants sanctions. As set forth below, Plaintiffs do not – and cannot – have a good faith nonfrivolous basis for pursuing their claims against Juggernaut Tactical. Their continuing pursuit of their claims is improper and harassing. While Plaintiffs and their counsel may believe their efforts are morally sound because they disagree with Juggernaut Tactical's right to manufacture and sell certain products, the purpose of litigation is not to fulfil some sense of moral purpose. It is an abuse of the litigation process, a waste of judicial resources, and an affront to proper litigants. An effective deterrence is necessary in this instance to warn against, and hopefully prevent, this type of improper legal pursuit in California.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> All exhibits are attached to the declaration of Howard Schilsky filed concurrently with this motion. 5351096

It is respectfully requested that this Honorable Court dismiss Juggernaut Tactical, award it costs and attorneys' fees, and issue a stark warning to Plaintiffs and their counsel, together with any other penalty this Court deems is warranted to preserve proper use of the litigation process.

## II. RELEVANT BACKGROUND

This coordinated proceeding arises from a series of criminal shootings that occurred in Rancho Tehama Reserve on November 13-14, 2017. During a deadly rampage, Kevin Janson Neal ("Neal") shot and killed five people and injured eighteen others at eight separate crime scenes. To perpetrate his criminal assault, Neal allegedly misused semi-automatic rifles assembled from "receiver blanks" and a variety of readily available component parts. "Receiver blanks" or "80% lower receivers" are items that have not yet reached the stage of manufacture to meet the definition of a "firearm frame" or "receiver" according to the Gun Control Act, 18 U.S.C. 921(a)(3). And they must be significantly machined to become operable receivers that can then be incorporated into a functioning firearm.

Plaintiffs initially instituted this action by filing two separate complaints that were coordinated in this Court. Plaintiffs' original complaints relied upon a market share liability theory as a basis for liability against Defendants. Defendants jointly filed a demurrer in January 2022 to the coordinated complaints arguing that market share liability was not viable for a variety of reasons. This Court granted Defendants' demurrer with leave to amend, holding that (1) market share liability only applies to an injury allegedly caused by an inherently defective product, and Plaintiffs failed to make this requisite allegation; and (2) Plaintiffs did not adequately plead that Defendants' products are fungible goods. Plaintiffs have now filed an Amended Complaint in a failed attempt to cure the deficiencies of their original complaints.

On May 24, 2022, between the time that Defendants' demurrer was granted, and the filing of the Amended Complaint, the parties jointly attended an inspection of the subject firearms and firearm parts misused by Neal. As this Court noted during the hearing on Defendants' demurrer, the inspection was anticipated to inform Plaintiffs as to potential amendments to their pleadings. Counsel attended the inspection on behalf of Juggernaut Tactical, together with Zackary King, a representative of Juggernaut Tactical, and Michael Shain, a firearms expert. Mr. 5351096

III.

A. LEGAL STANDARD

Pursuant to CCP § 128.7(b), parties and their attorneys must certify that pleadings or other written matters presented to the court have merit, "to the best of the person's knowledge, 5351096

Shain examined the evidence firearms and compared them to the products manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. For extensive reasons beyond dispute, Mr. Shain determined that the parts misused by Neal in 2017 could not have been manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. Mr. King similarly arrived at the same conclusion, and prepared a declaration setting forth the manufacturing process used by Juggernaut Tactical. Mr. Shain prepared a detailed report based on the evidence produced at the inspection, the declaration of Mr. King, and the products manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. This proof was forwarded to Plaintiffs' counsel on June 20, 2022, together with a letter by counsel for Juggernaut Tactical respectfully requesting that Juggernaut Tactical not be named as a defendant in the Amended Complaint since it is uncontroverted that it did not manufacture the parts used in the rifles that allegedly caused Plaintiffs' damages. Plaintiffs' counsel did not respond to the June 20, 2022 correspondence, and filed Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint on June 24, 2022, improperly naming Juggernaut Tactical as a defendant.

Following the inspection, any claimed good faith basis Plaintiffs purportedly had for maintaining this action against Juggernaut Tactical has been eliminated. Without any response to the June 20, 2022 correspondence, Juggernaut Tactical served on Plaintiffs a draft of this motion pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 128.7, providing, as required, a 21-day "safe harbor" period for Plaintiffs to cure their sanctionable conduct by dismissing Juggernaut Tactical from the Amended Complaint. (Ex. B, Correspondence to Plaintiff dated July 18, 2022). Plaintiffs have not responded to date, and continue their refusal to dismiss Juggernaut Tactical. Upon expiration of the 21-day safe harbor period, this motion was filed. As such, this motion is timely.

This Court can and should exercise its discretion under Section 128.7, and grant this motion in its entirety.

information, and belief, formed after an inquiry reasonable under the circumstances." CCP § 128.7(b). Neither parties nor their attorneys may file documents with an improper purpose, such as to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation. CCP § 128.7(b)(1). Further, attorneys may not present to the court arguments unsupported by the law. CCP § 128.7(b)(2). Finally, attorneys are required to only assert allegations supported by evidence and, if not supported by evidence, to specifically identify these allegations as likely to have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for investigation. CCP § 128.7(b)(3). Thus, under Section 128.7(b), "there are basically three types of submitted papers that warrant sanctions: factually frivolous (not well grounded in fact); legally frivolous (not warranted by existing law or a good faith argument for the extension, modification, or reversal of existing law); and papers interposed for an improper purpose." *Guillemin v. Stein*, 104 Cal.App.4th 156, 167 (2002).

An attorney's certification is not limited to the mere signing or filing of papers. Rather, sanctions are imposed for "presenting" a pleading or other paper in violation of the statute; an attorney "presents" a pleading or paper if s/he signs, files, submits **or later advocates the positions set forth in the original document**. *See* CCP § 128.7(b) (emphasis added). Thus, the statute imposes a continuing obligation on counsel to ensure that claims, defenses, and arguments are factually and legally sound. *See* Weil & Brown et al., CAL. PRAC. GUIDE: CIV. PRO. BEFORE TRIAL (The Rutter Group 2020) ¶ 9:1160. A litigant's obligations with respect to the contents of papers are not measured solely as of the time the papers are filed with the court, but are continuous and ongoing. The standard for violating the certification requirement is an objective standard requiring a well-founded belief supported by evidence. *Bockrath v. Aldrich Chemical Co.*, 21 Cal.4th 71, 82 (1999).

Moreover, California law requires that, at minimum, Plaintiffs must make a reasonable inquiry to rule out baseless claims. This duty continues even after the complaint is initially filed and plaintiffs must take into account the adverse party's evidence. *Peake v. Underwood*, 227 Cal.App.4th 428, 441 (2014). ("even though an action may not be frivolous when it is filed, it may become so if later-acquired evidence refutes the findings of a prefiling investigation and the 5351096

attorney continues to file papers supporting the client's claims"). In this case, Juggernaut Tactical has presented Plaintiffs and their counsel with indisputable evidence that the parts at issue were not manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. Plaintiffs are obligated to take this evidence into account.

Pursuant to CCP § 128.7(c) and (d), the filing of a document in violation of any of the certifications in section 128.7(b) may give rise to sanctions, both monetary and non-monetary. *Eichenbaum v. Alon*, 106 Cal.4th 967, 976 (2003). For example, if, after proper notice of a party's intent to submit a Section 128.7 motion, the pleading is not withdrawn or corrected, the Court is empowered to award reasonable expenses and attorney's fees incurred by movant in presenting the motion. CCP § 128.7(c)(1). Monetary sanctions may also include reasonable attorney's fees and other expenses incurred as a direct result of the sanctioned party's violation, on a broader scale. CCP § 128.7(c), (d); *see also Musaelian v. Adams*, 45 Cal.4th 512, 514, 519 (2009). Non-monetary sanctions may include striking the offending pleading. Weil & Brown et al., CAL. PRAC. GUIDE: CIV. PRO. BEFORE TRIAL (The Rutter Group 2020) ¶ 9:1216; *see also*, CCP § 436 (which allows the court to "[s]trike out any irrelevant, false, or improper matter inserted in any pleading").

# B. SANCTIONS ARE WARRANTED AGAINST PLAINTIFFS AND THEIR COUNSEL FOR KNOWINGLY AND WILLFULLY PROSECUTING FACTUALLY BASELESS CLAIMS.

Following the May 24 evidence inspection, Juggernaut Tactical provided Plaintiffs with indisputable evidence establishing that the parts used by Neal were not manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. Mr. Shain's report sets forth a detailed explanation as to why the parts at issue could not have been made by Juggernaut Tactical. (*See* Ex. A, Shain Report). While all of the evidence is extensive and overwhelming, a major glaring difference is that all of the 80% lower receivers and parts misused in the subject shooting were forged. Juggernaut Tactical does not, and never has, manufactured forged products. Rather, all 80% lower receivers and upper receivers manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical are CNC machined using billet blanks. (See Ex. A, King Dec.). As Mr. Shain explains in his report, the differences between a forged part and

machined part are visually apparent, indisputable, and dispositive. (*See* Ex. A, Shain Report). There is nothing Plaintiffs could point to that disputes this undeniable distinction.

In addition, as set forth in detail by Mr. Shain's report, numerous other indisputable differences abound between Juggernaut Tactical's products, and those misused by Neal, including but not limited to (1) the machined selector icons unique to Juggernaut Tactical's lower receivers that are not found on any of the evidence receivers; (2) the unique shape and continuous design of Juggernaut Tactical's trigger guards; (3) distinct raised relief features; (4) distinct magazine wells; (5) different pivot pin radii; (6) different front corner profiles; (7) different trigger guard radii; (8) different forward assist and shell deflector design; and (9) forge markings found only on the evidence parts. (Ex. A, Shain Report). Mr. Shain's report sets forth these differences in extensive detail with a full analysis. (See Ex. A, Shain Report). These facts are undeniable.

Plaintiffs continue to pursue their factually baseless claims against Juggernaut Tactical despite the overwhelming and unambiguous exculpatory evidence provided to them and their counsel. In their Amended Complaint, Plaintiffs allege that "on information and belief, NEAL used up to three AR-15 GHOST GUNS made using DEFENDANTS' GHOST GUN KITS." (Amended Complaint at ¶131). Plaintiffs know that this allegation is false with respect to Juggernaut Tactical, and they knew it prior to filing the Amended Complaint. Plaintiffs further allege that "the AR-15 style assault rifles looked essentially similar to one another without clear features that could enable the average user to identify which GHOST GUN KITS were used to assemble each such firearm." (Amended Complaint at ¶127). Plaintiffs know this allegation is untrue given the obvious visual differences between the parts as set forth by Mr. Shain. (Ex. A, Shain Report). In any event, regardless of what is visually apparent to the "average user," Plaintiffs are now informed with definitive and objectively indisputable evidence to affirmatively rule out Juggernaut Tactical as the manufacturer. Faced with this evidence, Plaintiffs continue to pursue their claims against Juggernaut Tactical in violation of their obligations pursuant to CCP § 128.7(b)(3).

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Accordingly, there is no factual or evidentiary support for Plaintiffs' claims that Neal misused Juggernaut Tactical's products to perpetrate his crimes. The inspection provided Plaintiffs a "reasonable opportunity for further investigation," as set forth in CCP § 128.7(b)(3). Plaintiffs' counsel and their expert spent a full day inspecting and documenting the physical evidence. Further investigation is not necessary or warranted to conclude the parts were not manufactured by Juggernaut Tactical. Plaintiffs have not satisfied their burden, as they "must" under California law, to take "into account [Juggernaut Tactical's] evidence." Peake, 227 Cal.App.4th at 441. By disregarding the clear and conclusive evidence provided to them, and continuing to pursue "legally and factually frivolous" claims, plaintiffs and their counsel are subject to sanctions pursuant to CCP § 128.7.

### IV. **CONCLUSION**

For all of the foregoing reasons and those set forth in the exhibits attached hereto, the Court should grant the instant motion for sanctions pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 128.7, dismiss Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint against Juggernaut Tactical, issue an award of attorneys' fees and costs, and grant such other and further penalty as the Court may deem just and proper to preserve proper use of the litigation process as has been abused by Plaintiffs and their counsel in this matter.

EDLIN GALLAGHER HUIE + BLUM Date: August 17, 2022

By: <u>/s/ Michael Gallagher</u> MICHAEL E. GALLAGHER Attorneys for Defendant JUGGERNAUT TACTICAL INC.

RENZULLI LAW FIRM, LLP

By: /s/ Howard Schilsky\_

HOWARD B. SCHILSKY (Pro Hac Vice) CHRISTOPHER RENZULLI (Pro Hac Vice) Attorneys for Defendant

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JUGGERNAUT TACTICAL INC.

1	Re: <u>Ghost Gunner Firearms Cases</u> Orange County Superior Court Case No. JCCP 5167		
2	PROOF OF SERVICE – CCP §1013(a)(3)		
3	TROOF OF SERVICE - CCT STUIS(a)(S)		
4	STATE OF CALIFORNIA/COUNTY OF Los Angeles		
5 6	I am a citizen of the United States and an employee in the County of Los Angeles. I am over the age of eighteen (18) years and not a party to the within action. My business address is EDLIN GALLAGHER HUIE + BLUM LLP, 515 S. Flower Street, Suite 1020, Los Angeles,		
7	California 90071.		
8	On the date set forth below, I served the within:		
9	DEFENDANT JUGGERNAUT TACTICAL, INC.'S NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR SANCTIONS PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE SECTION 128.7; AND MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND		
10	AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT THEREOF		
11	on the following parties:		
12	SEE ATTACHED SERVICE LIST  BY PERSONAL SERVICE: I caused a copy of said documents to be hand delivered to the interested party at the address set forth above.		
13	X BY ELECTRONIC MAIL: Based upon stipulation and agreement of the parties for		
<ul><li>14</li><li>15</li></ul>	service by electronic transmission, I caused said document(s) to be sent to the persons at the electronic mail address listed above. I did not receive within a reasonable amount of time after the transmission, any electronic message or other indication that		
16	the transmission was not successful.		
17	BY MAIL: I caused such envelope to be deposited in the mail at Los Angeles, California. I am readily familiar with the firm's practice for collection and processing		
18	of correspondence for mailing. It is deposited with the U.S. Postal Service on that same day in the ordinary course of business.		
19	BY FEDERAL EXPRESS: I caused such envelope to be deposited in the appropriate		
<ul><li>20</li><li>21</li></ul>	Federal Express envelope, to the Federal Express office located at 515 S. Flower Street, Suite 1020, Los Angeles, California 90071, to be delivered by the next busine day. I am readily familiar with the firm's practice for collection and processing of		
22	correspondence for transmittal by Federal Express. It is deposited with Federal Express on that same day in the ordinary course of business.		
23	BY FACSIMILE: I caused said documents to be sent via facsimile to the interested		
24	party at the facsimile number set forth below.		
25	I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this document is executed on August 17, 2022, at Los Angeles, California.		
26	On andilli		
27	DESIREE CAUDILLO		
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### **SERVICE LIST** 1 2 **Ghost Gunner Firearms Cases** Our Clients: Juggernaut Tactical Inc. 3 Orange County Superior Court Case No. JCCP 5167 (30-2019-01111797) 4 Dugan Barr 5 Douglas Mudford doug@ca-lawyer.com 6 Estee Lewis 7 estee@ca-lawyer.com Catie Barr 8 catie@ca-lawyer.com **Brandon Storment** 9 brandon@barrandmudford.com 10 Barr & Mudford, LLP Post Office Box 994390 11 Redding, CA 96099-4390 12 Fax: (530) 243-1648 Attorneys for Plaintiffs 13 14 Amy K. Van Zant 15 avanzant@orrick.com Shayan Said 16 ssaid@orrick.com Anna Z. Saber 17 annasaber@orrick.com 18 Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP 1000 Marsh Road 19 Menlo Park, CA 94025-1015 Fax: (650) 614-7401 20 Attorneys for Plaintiffs 21 22 Gerald B. Singleton gerald@SLFfirm.com 23 SINGLETON LAW FIRM 24 450 A Street, 5th Floor San Diego, CA 92101 25 Fax: (619) 255-1515 26 Attorneys for Plaintiffs 27 28

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