# IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

KAREN HEPP

Plaintiff,

**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED** 

v.

FACEBOOK, INC., IMGUR, INC., REDDIT, INC., GIPHY, INC., WGCZ S.R.O. and DOES 1-10

Defendants.

#### **COMPLAINT**

Plaintiff, Karen Hepp ("Plaintiff"), by and through her attorneys, Cohen Fineman, LLC, for her Complaint against Defendants, Facebook, Inc., Imgur, Inc., Reddit, Inc., Giphy, Inc., WCGZ, S.R.O. and Does 1-10 (collectively, "Defendants"), alleges as follows:

#### PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

- 1. This is an action resulting from Defendants' violations of Pennsylvania's "Right of Publicity" statute, 42 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 8316, and Plaintiff's common law right of publicity stemming from Defendants' usurpation and unlawful use of her image.
- 2. Plaintiff, a public figure, has suffered irreparable harm from the unlawful dissemination and publication of her image on various commercial websites.

#### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 3. The original jurisdiction of this Court is invoked pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1332 because the parties have complete diversity of citizenship and the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000.
- 4. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants in that, among other things: (a) Defendants are engaged in tortious conduct within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in this District, including by using Plaintiff's image without her authorization and (b) Defendants' conduct causes injury to Plaintiff within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- 5. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) because a substantial part of the acts, omissions and events giving rise to the claims asserted in this Complaint occurred in this judicial district.

#### **PARTIES**

- 6. Plaintiff, Karen Hepp, is an adult individual residing at 737 South Latches Lane, Merion Station, Pennsylvania 19066.
- 7. Defendant, Facebook, Inc., on information and belief, is a for-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of Delaware, having its registered agent, Corporation Service Company, located at 251 Little Falls Drive, Wilmington, Delaware 19808.
- 8. Defendant, Facebook, Inc., owns and operates "Facebook.com," one of the world's largest social media internet sites.
- 9. Defendant, Imgur, Inc., on information and belief, is a for-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of Delaware, having its registered agent, Incorporating Services, Ltd., located at 3500 S. Dupont Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901.

- 10. Defendant, Imgur, Inc., is an internet-based online image-sharing business that owns and operates the website known as "Imgur.com."
- 11. Defendant, Reddit, Inc., on information and belief, is a for-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of Delaware, having its registered agent, Corporation Service Company, located at 251 Little Falls Drive, Wilmington, Delaware 19808.
- 12. Defendant, Reddit, Inc., is an American social news aggregation company that owns and operates the website known as "Reddit.com."
- 13. Defendant, Giphy, Inc., on information and belief, is a for-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of Delaware, having its registered agent, Corporation Service Company, located at 251 Little Falls Drive, Wilmington, Delaware 19808.
- 14. Defendant, Giphy, Inc., owns and operates a website known as "Giphy.com" that consists of an online database and search engine that allows users to search for and share short looping videos.
- 15. Defendant, WCGZ, S.R.O., on information and belief, is a limited liability company existing under the laws of the Czech Republic and having a place of business at Praha 1 Nové Město, Krakovská 1366/25, PSČ 110 00 Czech Republic.
- 16. Defendant, WCGZ S.R.O., owns and operates "XNXX.com," a popular adult-oriented website featuring pornographic materials.
- 17. Defendants Does 1 through 10 are the owners and operators of other websites and/or media outlets. Plaintiff is unaware of the true names or capacities of Does 1 through 10. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on that basis avers, that Does 1 through 10 either (a) directly performed the acts alleged herein, (b) were acting as the agents, principals, alter egos, employees, or representatives of the other Defendants, and/or (c) otherwise participated in the

acts alleged herein with the other Defendants. Accordingly, Defendants Does 1 through 10 each are liable for all of the acts alleged herein because they were the cause in fact and proximate cause of all injuries suffered by Plaintiff as alleged herein. Plaintiff will amend the Complaint to state the true names of Defendants Does 1 through 10 when their identities are discovered.

### **FACTS GIVING RISE TO THIS ACTION**

- 18. Plaintiff is a professional television news anchor and joined the FOX 29 News team (Philadelphia-based) in November of 2010.
- 19. Plaintiff is a co-anchor of the 4 am to 6 am hours of "Good Day Philadelphia," a morning news program, and joins the set as co-host for the final hour of the show from 9 am to 10 am.
- 20. Prior to joining FOX 29, Plaintiff worked at WNYW-TV in New York City, anchoring Good Day Wakeup.
- 21. Plaintiff joined Fox 5 in January of 2005 as the weekend anchor.
- 22. Plaintiff previously worked for NBC-owned-and-operated stations for 8 years including: WNBC in New York; WCAU in Philadelphia; and WVIT in Connecticut. Her career began in Binghamton, New York and Rochester, New York.
- 23. Plaintiff graduated from New York University and hails from the Philadelphia region.
- 24. Approximately two years ago, Plaintiff discovered through her co-workers and managers, that, without her consent, a photograph of her taken by a security camera in a convenience store located in New York City was being used in online advertisements for erectile dysfunction and dating websites.
- 25. Plaintiff was unaware that her photograph was taken in said convenience store and does not know the identity or the location of the store or how her photograph was secured. A true and

4

correct copy of the photograph is attached hereto, made a part thereof and marked as Exhibit "A." Said photograph shall be referred to hereafter as "The photo."

- 26. Plaintiff has since learned that The Photo has appeared illegally on many other websites.
- 27. The photo was featured in a Facebook advertisement soliciting users to "meet and chat with single women." A true and correct copy of said advertisement is attached hereto, made a part hereof and marked as Exhibit "B."
- 28. The photo was featured on Imgur under the heading "milf," which is a derogatory and degrading slang acronym that refers to a sexually attractive woman with young children. The Imgur link address is <a href="https://i.imgur.com/0lulkf2.jpg">https://i.imgur.com/0lulkf2.jpg</a>. A true and correct copy of said photograph within the Imgur website is attached hereto, made a part hereof and marked as Exhibit "C."
- The photo was featured on Reddit titled "Amazing" in the subgroup r/obsf ("older but 29. still \$#^@able") and posted by a user known as "pepsi next." There is a hyperlink for the which site. The Reddit url address photograph links to the **Imgur** is https://www.reddit.com/r/obsf/comments/5owd59/amazing/dcnh8wj/. A true and correct copy of said photograph within the Reddit website is attached hereto, made a part hereof and marked as Exhibit "D."
- 30. The photo was modified and featured on Giphy wherein a video appears in the background of a man -- who is hiding behind a glass commercial freezer door and masturbating -- to what would appear, from his perspective, to be the backside of Plaintiff. The Gighy url addresses of this combination image/video are as follows: 1) <a href="https://i.giphy.com/media/NfApNcuyg8mzK/giphy.mp4">https://i.giphy.com/media/NfApNcuyg8mzK/giphy.mp4</a>; 2)
- https://media.giphy.com/media/NfApNcuyg8mzK/giphy.gif, and 3)
  https://media.giphy.com/media/l41YmuCE7ZZQeQd1e/giphy.gif. A true and correct copy of

said image/video within the Giphy website is attached hereto, made a part hereof and marked as Exhibit "E."

31. The photo was featured on the XNXX site in the "milf" gallery 44/46 and can be easily downloaded. The XNXX site url address is https://multi.xnxx.com/gallery/1116129/a34b/milf\_gallery\_44\_46/. A true and correct copy of said photograph within the XNXX website is attached hereto, made a part hereof and marked as Exhibit "F."

### COUNT I (Violation of 42 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 8316)

- 32. The averments contained in Paragraphs 1 through 31 of this Complaint are incorporated herein by reference as though set forth in full.
- 33. Plaintiff is a well-known public figure who has spent years honing her skills as a professional television broadcaster.
- 34. Plaintiff is well-regarded in the Philadelphia community and has earned an excellent reputation as a moral and upstanding community leader and public person.
- 35. Her image has high intrinsic commercial value.
- 36. Through their actions, described *supra*, Defendants have appropriated Plaintiff's likeness, which has commercial value, and used same for commercial purposes without Plaintiff's written consent.
- 37. Defendants knew, based upon Plaintiff's notoriety, that the Photo depicted Plaintiff and no one else.
- 38. Plaintiff's image is instantly identifiable and automatically associated with Plaintiff's professional persona.

- 39. Defendants' sexualization of Plaintiff's image and use for prurient and illicit purposes is abhorrent and disgusting.
- 40. Defendants' actions with respect to Plaintiff's image have caused serious, permanent and irreparable harm to Plaintiff's reputation.
- 41. Plaintiff seeks an affirmative injunction mandating that all Defendants remove Plaintiff's image immediately from their respective websites.
- 42. Plaintiff seeks compensatory damages to redress Defendants' wrongful use of Plaintiff's image.

# COUNT II (Pennsylvania common law right of publicity)

- 43. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 42 as if set forth in full.
- 44. Defendants appropriated Plaintiff's valuable likeness, without authorization, and used it to their commercial advantage.
- 45. Under the common law in Pennsylvania, Plaintiff maintains an exclusive entitlement to control the commercial value of her name and/or likeness and to prevent others from exploiting it without permission.
- 46. Under the circumstances presented here, Plaintiff would never have permitted any of the Defendants to use her image to promote prurient and base interests.
- 47. Defendants' actions with respect to Plaintiff's image have caused serious, permanent and irreparable harm to Plaintiff's reputation.
- 48. Plaintiff seeks an injunction mandating that all Defendants remove Plaintiff's image immediately from their respective websites.
- 49. Plaintiff seeks compensatory damages to redress Defendants' wrongful use of Plaintiff's image.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that this Court enter judgment in her favor on each and

every claim for relief set forth above and award her relief including, but not limited to, an Order:

1. Preliminarily and permanently enjoining Defendants, their officers, employees, agents,

subsidiaries, representatives, distributors, dealers, members, affiliates, licensees, internet service

providers, and all persons acting in concert or participation with them from publishing Plaintiff's

photograph.

2. Requiring Defendants to take down Plaintiff's photograph and any and all related

images/videos and advertisements using Plaintiff's image for promotion on all websites, threads

and chat rooms.

3. Requiring Defendants to provide Plaintiff with an accounting of any and all revenue and

profits derived from the exploitation of Plaintiff's image.

4. Awarding Plaintiff monetary relief including damages sustained by Plaintiff in an amount

not yet determined, including actual damages, reputational damages, and/or Defendants' profits

in an amount in excess of \$10,000,000.

5. Awarding Plaintiff her costs and attorneys' fees in this action.

6. Awarding such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and appropriate.

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury.

Respectfully submitted,

COHEN TINEMAN, LLC

(PA ID No. 75717)

Samuel B. Fineman, Esq.

Attorney for Plaintiff

1999 Marlton Pike E., Suite 4

8

## Case 2:19-cv-04034-JS Document 1 Filed 09/04/19 Page 9 of 9

Cherry Hill, NJ 08003 (856) 304-0699 – tel. (856) 489-5088 – fax sfineman@cohenfineman.com

# EXHIBIT "A"



# EXHIBIT "B"

## Sponsored

Create Ad





Meet Your Girlfriend apps.facebook.com

Meet and chat with single women near you on the FirstMet© Facebook app. Click Here!

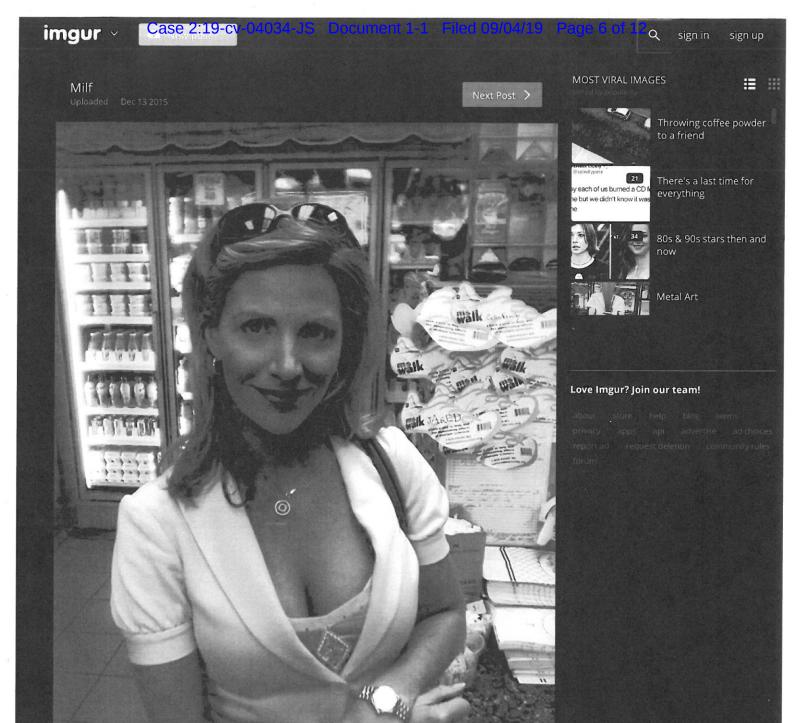


View Single Ladies

# Click Here to Browse Singles Near You! ourtime.com

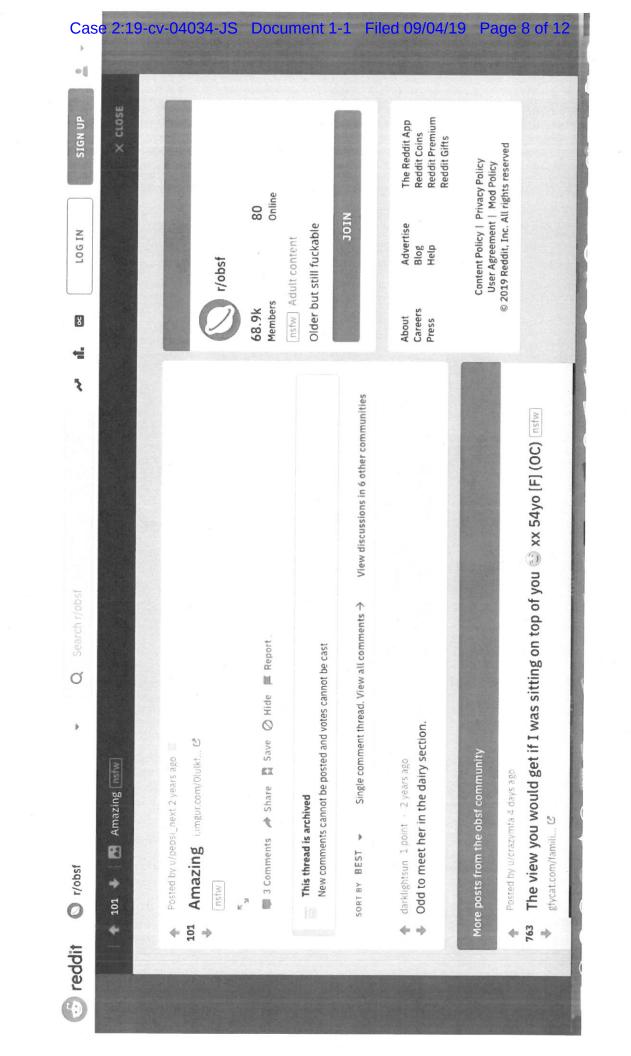
Find the Woman for You - The Best Place to Meet Like-Minded Singles Near You!

# EXHIBIT "C"



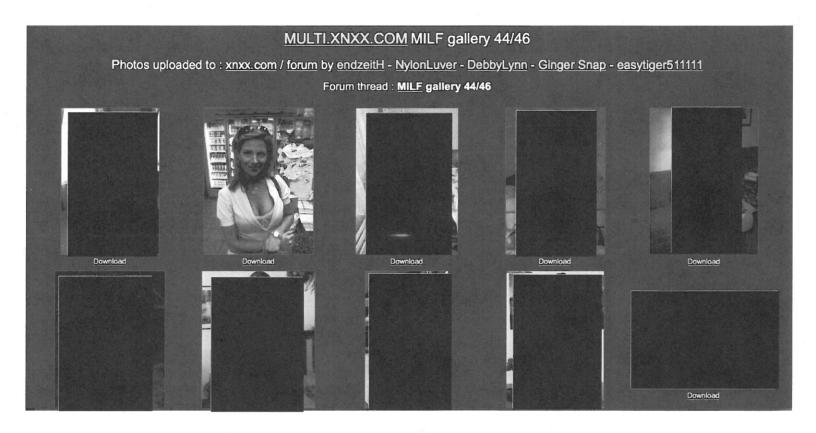
+ 11,543 views

# EXHIBIT "D"



# EXHIBIT "E"

# EXHIBIT "F"



### Case 2:19-cv-04034-JS Document 1-2 Filed 09/04/19 Page 1 of 3

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

#### DESIGNATION FORM

(to be used by counsel or pro se plaintiff to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate calendar)

Address of Plaintiff:	les Lane, Menon Station, PA 19000					
Address of Defendant: 251 Little F	dress of Defendant: 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808					
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction:	Merion Station, Pennsylvania					
RELATED CASE, IF ANY:						
Case Number: Judge:	Date Terminated:					
Civil cases are deemed related when Yes is answered to any of the following	ng questions:					
<ol> <li>Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court?</li> </ol>						
2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court?						
<ol> <li>Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already numbered case pending or within one year previously terminated acti</li> </ol>						
4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appearance filed by the same individual?	eal, or pro se civil rights Yes No					
this court except as noted above. September 3, 2019 DATE:	75717  Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)					
CIVIL: (Place a √ in one category only)						
A. Federal Question Cases:	B. Diversity Jurisdiction Cases:					
□       1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts         □       2. FELA         □       3. Jones Act-Personal Injury         □       4. Antitrust         □       5. Patent         □       6. Labor-Management Relations         7. Civil Rights         □       8. Habeas Corpus         □       9. Securities Act(s) Cases         □       10. Social Security Review Cases         □       11. All other Federal Question Cases         (Please specify):	<ol> <li>Insurance Contract and Other Contracts</li> <li>Airplane Personal Injury</li> <li>Assault, Defamation</li> <li>Marine Personal Injury</li> <li>Motor Vehicle Personal Injury</li> <li>Other Personal Injury (Please specify):</li> <li>Products Liability</li> <li>Products Liability – Asbestos</li> <li>All other Diversity Cases (Please specify):</li> <li>right of publicity</li> </ol>					
ARBITR/	ATION CERTIFICATION					
(The effect of this certification is a Samuel B. Fineman	to remove the case from eligibility for arbitration.) se plaintiff, do hereby certify:					
Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, § 3(c) (2), that to the best of exceed the sum of \$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs:	my knowledge and belief, the damages recoverable in this civil action case					
Relief other than monetary damages is sought.						
DATE.	n here if applicable 75717					
Attorney-at-	-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)					

# IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

### CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

CIVIL ACTION

v.								
Facebook, Inc. e	cebook, Inc. et al.							
In accordance with the Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan of this court, counsel for blaintiff shall complete a Case Management Track Designation Form in all civil cases at the time of illing the complaint and serve a copy on all defendants. (See § 1:03 of the plan set forth on the reverse side of this form.) In the event that a defendant does not agree with the plaintiff regarding said designation, that defendant shall, with its first appearance, submit to the clerk of court and serve on the plaintiff and all other parties, a Case Management Track Designation Form specifying the track of which that defendant believes the case should be assigned.								
SELECT ONE OF THE FO	DLLOWING CASE MANAGEN	MENT TRACKS:						
(a) Habeas Corpus – Cases brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 through § 2255.								
(b) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits.								
c) Arbitration – Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2.								
(d) Asbestos – Cases involving claims for personal injury or property damage from exposure to asbestos.								
(e) Special Management – Cases that do not fall into tracks (a) through (d) that are commonly referred to as complex and that need special or intense management by the court. (See reverse side of this form for a detailed explanation of special management cases.)								
(f) Standard Management –	Cases that do not fall into any or	ne of the other tracks.	$\checkmark$					
9/3/19 Date 856-304-0699	Samuel B. Fineman Attorney-at-law 856-489-5088	Plaintiff  Attorney for  sfineman@cohenfineman	om					
Telephone	FAX Number	E-Mail Address						

(Civ. 660) 10/02

Karen Hepp

## Case 2:19-cv-04034-JS Document 1-2 Filed 09/04/19 Page 3 of 3

JS 44 (Rev. 02/19)

### **CIVIL COVER SHEET**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

purpose or mining			9 (000000000000000000000000000000000000						
I. (a) PLAINTIFFS	DEFENDANTS								
Karen Hepp				Facebook, Inc., IMGUR, Inc., Reddit, Inc., Giphy, Inc., WGCZ S.R.O. and Does 1-10					
(b) County of Residence of	of First Listed Plaintiff M	ontgomery		County of Residence	of First List	ed Defendant	New Castle,	Delawa	are
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Montgomery  (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				County of Hedrachies	(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)				
pactar in our raining				NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.					
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, A				Attorneys (If Known)					
Cohen Fineman, LLC; Sa 1999 Marlton Pike E., Sui Cherry Hill NJ 08003: Te	ite 4	, of record							
II. BASIS OF JURISDI		ne Box Only)	III. CI	TIZENSHIP OF P (For Diversity Cases Only)	RINCIPA	L PARTIES	(Place an "X" in and One Box f		
☐ 1 U.S. Government	☐ 3 Federal Question		Civi.	`	TF DEF	I	ringinal Place	PTF	DEF
Plaintiff	(U.S. Government)	Not a Party)	Citiz	en of This State	NI 11	Incorporated or Pr of Business In		L 4	<b>D</b> 4
U.S. Government Defendant			Citiz	en of Another State	2 🗖 2	Incorporated and of Business In		<b>5</b>	<b>X</b> 5
				en or Subject of a	3 🗆 3	Foreign Nation		□ 6	<b>1</b> 6
IV. NATURE OF SUIT	(Place an "X" in One Box On	dy)				here for: Nature	of Suit Code D	escription	<u>1S</u> .
CONTRACT		RTS	FC	ORFEITURE/PENALTY		KRUPTCY		STATUT	ES
☐ 110 Insurance	PERSONAL INJURY	PERSONAL INJUR	Y 🗆 62	25 Drug Related Seizure		eal 28 USC 158	☐ 375 False C ☐ 376 Qui Tar		,
☐ 120 Marine ☐ 130 Miller Act	☐ 310 Airplane ☐ 315 Airplane Product	☐ 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability	□ 69	of Property 21 USC 881 90 Other	423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157		3729(a		
☐ 140 Negotiable Instrument	Liability	☐ 367 Health Care/					☐ 400 State Re		ment
☐ 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	☐ 320 Assault, Libel & Slander	Pharmaceutical Personal Injury			PROPERTY RIGHTS  ☐ 820 Copyrights		☐ 410 Antitrus ☐ 430 Banks a		ıg
☐ 151 Medicare Act	☐ 330 Federal Employers'	Product Liability			830 Patent 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application		☐ 450 Comme	erce	
☐ 152 Recovery of Defaulted	Liability 7 240 Marina	☐ 368 Asbestos Persona Injury Product	1				☐ 460 Deporta ☐ 470 Rackete		ced and
Student Loans (Excludes Veterans)	☐ 340 Marine ☐ 345 Marine Product	Liability			☐ 840 Trad			Organizat	
☐ 153 Recovery of Overpayment	Liability	PERSONAL PROPER		LABOR	SOCIAL 861 HIA	SECURITY	☐ 480 Consun ☐ 485 Telepho		mer
of Veteran's Benefits  ☐ 160 Stockholders' Suits	☐ 350 Motor Vehicle ☐ 355 Motor Vehicle	☐ 370 Other Fraud ☐ 371 Truth in Lending		10 Fair Labor Standards Act		k Lung (923)		ion Act	illei
☐ 190 Other Contract	Product Liability	380 Other Personal	100000000000000000000000000000000000000	20 Labor/Management		C/DIWW (405(g))	☐ 490 Cable/S		4:4:/
☐ 195 Contract Product Liability ☐ 196 Franchise	☐ 360 Other Personal Injury	Property Damage  385 Property Damage		Relations 40 Railway Labor Act	☐ 864 SSIE ☐ 865 RSI		☐ 850 Securiti Exchan		oatties/
190 Franciise	☐ 362 Personal Injury -	Product Liability		51 Family and Medical		(***(8))	☐ 890 Other S	tatutory Ac	ctions
REAL PROPERTY	Medical Malpractice CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETITIO	NS 0 79	Leave Act 90 Other Labor Litigation	FEDER	AL TAX SUITS	891 Agricul		atters
210 Land Condemnation	☐ 440 Other Civil Rights	Habeas Corpus:		91 Employee Retirement		s (U.S. Plaintiff	☐ 895 Freedor		
☐ 220 Foreclosure	☐ 441 Voting	☐ 463 Alien Detainee		Income Security Act		efendant)	Act		
☐ 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment ☐ 240 Torts to Land	☐ 442 Employment ☐ 443 Housing/	510 Motions to Vacate Sentence	e			Third Party JSC 7609	☐ 896 Arbitra ☐ 899 Admini		ocedure
245 Tort Product Liability	Accommodations	☐ 530 General					Act/Rev	view or Ap	
290 All Other Real Property	☐ 445 Amer. w/Disabilities -	535 Death Penalty	7.4	IMMIGRATION 62 Naturalization Application	2		Agency 950 Constitu	Decision	of
	Employment  446 Amer. w/Disabilities -	Other:  540 Mandamus & Oth		65 Other Immigration	"		State S		
	Other	550 Civil Rights		Actions					
	☐ 448 Education	☐ 555 Prison Condition ☐ 560 Civil Detainee -			1				
		Conditions of Confinement							
	557			nstated or	erred from	☐ 6 Multidist	n -	Multidi Litigati	on -
				(specify	v)	Transfer		Direct F	ile
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION	28 U.S.C. § 1332		re filing (	Do not cite jurisdictional sta	itutes unless d	iversity):			
0.1002 01 11011		ause: statute violation an	d PA co	mmon law right of p	ublicity				
VII. REQUESTED IN		IS A CLASS ACTIO		DEMAND S		CHECK YES only	y if demanded i	n compla	int:
COMPLAINT:	UNDER RULE 2			10,000,000.00	J	URY DEMAND	: X Yes	□No	
VIII. RELATED CAS	E(S) (See instructions):								
IF ANY	the manuellons).	JUDGE /			DOCKI	ET NUMBER _			
DATE		SIGNATURE OF AT	TORNEY	OF RECORD					
September 3, 2019		111		-					
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY									
DECEIDT # A	MOUNT	APPLYING IFP		JUDGE		MAG. JU	DGE		