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FILED
Superior Court of California
County of Sacramento
10/16/2024
T. Shaddix, Deputy

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO**

SIGIFREDO PEREZ JR., ISRAEL
ALCANTAR and DAVID MACIAS,
individually and on behalf of all others
similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

vs.

SIERRA MOUNTAIN EXPRESS, INC.;
and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. 34-2020-00279284-CU-OE-GDS

*Assigned for all purposes to
Hon. Jill H. Talley
Dept. 23*

**~~[PROPOSED]~~ ORDER AND JUDGMENT
GRANTING FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS
ACTION SETTLEMENT**

Date: October 4, 2024
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Dept: 23

1 This matter came on for hearing on October 4, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., in Department 23 of
2 the above-captioned Court on the unopposed Motion for Final Approval of Class Action
3 Settlement pursuant to California Rule of Court 3.769, this Court's Order Granting Preliminary
4 Approval filed July 15, 2024 and the CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT
5 AGREEMENT AND CLASS NOTICE ("Settlement Agreement"), a copy of which was filed in
6 conjunction with the Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement.

7 Having received and considered the Settlement Agreement, the supporting papers filed by
8 the Parties, and the evidence and argument received by the Court in conjunction with the
9 unopposed Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement heard May 17, 2024 and
10 the instant Motion for Final Approval, the Court grants final approval of the Settlement and
11 HEREBY ORDERS AND MAKES THE FOLLOWING DETERMINATIONS:

12 1. Pursuant to the Order Granting Preliminary Approval, a Notice Packet was sent to
13 each Class Member by first-class mail. These papers informed the Class of the terms of the
14 Settlement, their right to receive an Individual Settlement Payment, their right (a) to comment on
15 or object to the Settlement, (b) to request exclusion from the Settlement and pursue their own
16 remedies, and (c) of their right to appear in person or by counsel at the final approval hearing and
17 to be heard regarding approval of the Settlement. Adequate periods of time were provided by
18 each of these procedures. No member of the Class filed written objection to the proposed
19 Settlement as part of this notice process or stated an intention to appear at the final approval
20 hearing.

21 2. The Court finds and determines that this notice procedure afforded adequate
22 protections to Class Members and provides the basis for the Court to make an informed decision
23 regarding approval of the Settlement based on the responses of the Class. The Court finds and
24 determines that the notice provided in this case was the best notice practicable, which satisfied
25 the requirements of law and due process.

26 3. With respect to the Class and for purposes of approving this Settlement only, this
27 Court finds and concludes that: (a) the members of the Class are ascertainable and so numerous
28 that joinder of all members is impracticable; (b) there are questions of law or fact common to the

1 Class, and there is a well-defined community of interest among members of the Class with respect
2 to the subject matter of the Action; (c) the claims of Class Representative Sigifredo Perez Jr. are
3 typical of the claims of the members of the Class; (d) the Class Representative has fairly and
4 adequately protected the interests of the members of the Class; (e) a class action is superior to
5 other available methods for an efficient adjudication of this controversy; and (f) the counsel of
6 record for the Class Representative, i.e., Class Counsel, are qualified to serve as counsel for
7 Plaintiff in their individual and representative capacities for the Class.

8 4. The Court has certified a Class, as that term is defined in and by the terms of the
9 Settlement Agreement as all persons who contracted with Defendant SME to provide auto
10 transport services pursuant to an Independent Contractor Equipment Lease Agreement or a
11 Trucking and Equipment Lease Agreement with SME (i.e., any “owner operator” who drove
12 under SME’s authority or Department of Transportation number) in the California at any time
13 during the Class Period, inclusive of any corporate entities headed by an individual owner
14 operator who drove individually during the Class Period of October 1, 2018 to August 14, 2023,
15 and the Court deems this definition sufficient for purposes of California Rule of Court 3.765(a).

16 5. The Court hereby confirms Aegis Law Firm, PC and The Law Office of Neda
17 Agguire, APC as Class Counsel.

18 6. The Court hereby confirms Plaintiffs Sigifredo Perez Jr., David Macias, and Israel
19 Alcantar as the Class Representatives in this Action.

20 7. The Court finds and determines that the terms set forth in the Settlement
21 Agreement are fair, reasonable, and adequate and directs the Parties to effectuate the Settlement
22 according to its terms, having found that the Settlement was reached as a result of informed and
23 non-collusive arm’s-length negotiations facilitated by a neutral mediator. The Court further finds
24 that the Parties conducted extensive investigation, research, and discovery and that their attorneys
25 were able to reasonably evaluate their respective positions. The Court also finds that the
26 Settlement will enable the Parties to avoid additional and potentially substantial litigation costs,
27 as well as delay and risks if the Parties were to continue to litigate the case. The Court has
28

1 reviewed the monetary recovery provided as part of the Settlement and recognizes the significant
2 value accorded to the Class.

3 8. The Court further finds and determines that the terms of the Settlement are fair,
4 reasonable and adequate to the Class and to each Participating Class Member and that the
5 Settlement is ordered finally approved, and that all terms and provisions of the Settlement should
6 be and hereby are ordered to be consummated.

7 9. The Court hereby approves the Gross Settlement Amount of \$3,895,000.00.

8 10. The Court finds and determines that the Individual Settlement Payments to be paid
9 to Participating Class Members as provided for by the Settlement are fair and reasonable. The
10 Court hereby gives final approval to and orders the payment of those amounts be made to the
11 Participating Class Members in accordance with the Settlement Agreement.

12 11. The Court finds and determines that payment to the California Labor and
13 Workforce Development Agency of \$150,000.000 as its share of the settlement of civil penalties
14 in this case is fair, reasonable, and appropriate. The Court hereby gives final approval to and
15 orders that the payment of that amount be paid in accordance with the Settlement Agreement.

16 12. The Court finds and determines that the fees and expenses in administering the
17 Settlement incurred by Phoenix Settlement Administrators in the amount of \$7,000.00, are fair
18 and reasonable. The Court hereby gives final approval to and orders that the payment of that
19 amount in accordance with the Settlement.

20 13. The Court finds and determines the Class Representative Service Awards of up
21 to \$5,000 for each Plaintiff (for a total of \$15,000 in Class Representative Service Awards) is
22 fair and reasonable. The Court hereby orders the Administrator to make this payment to the
23 Plaintiff/Class Representative in accordance with the terms of the Settlement Agreement.

24 14. Pursuant to the terms of the Settlement, and the authorities, evidence and
25 argument submitted by Class Counsel, the Court hereby awards Class Counsel attorneys' fees
26 in the sum of \$1,363,250.00 and litigation costs of \$19,864.54. The Court finds such amounts
27 to be fair and reasonable. The Court hereby orders the Settlement Administrator to make these
28 payments in accordance with the terms of the Settlement Agreement.

1 15. Without affecting the finality of this order or the entry of judgment in any way,
2 the Court retains jurisdiction of all matters relating to the interpretation, administration,
3 implementation, effectuation, and enforcement of this order and the Settlement.

4 16. Neither Defendant nor any related persons or entities shall have any further
5 liability for costs, expenses, interest, attorneys' fees, or for any other charge, expense, or liability,
6 except as provided for by the Settlement Agreement.

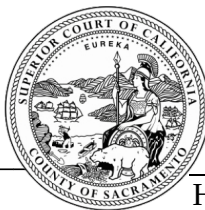
7 17. Neither the making of the Settlement Agreement nor the entry into the Settlement
8 Agreement constitutes an admission by Defendant, nor is this order a finding of the validity of
9 any claims in this case or of any other wrongdoing. Further, the Settlement Agreement is not a
10 concession, and shall not be used as an admission of any wrongdoing, fault, or omission of any
11 entity or persons; nor may any action taken to carry out the terms of the Settlement Agreement
12 be construed as an admission or concession by or against Defendant or any related person or
13 entity.

14 18. Nothing in this order shall preclude any action to enforce the Parties' obligations
15 under the Settlement or under this order, including the requirement that Defendants make
16 payment to the Participating Class Members in accordance with the Settlement.

17 19. This Judgment is intended to be a final disposition in its entirety of the above
18 captioned action. Without affecting the finality of this judgment in any way, the Court retains
19 jurisdiction of all matters relating to the interpretation, administration, implementation,
20 effectuation, and enforcement of the Settlement pursuant to C.C.P. § 664.6.

21 20. The Parties will bear their own costs and attorneys' fees except as otherwise
22 provided by this Court's Order awarding Class Counsels' Award for attorneys' fees and
23 litigation costs.

24
25 DATED: 10/16/2024



Jill Talley
Honorable Jill H. Talley
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT