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Attorneys for PLAINTIFF

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

ANA RAYOS, individually, and on behalf of
other members of the general public similarly
situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

RESTAURANT LEADERSHIP GROUP,
LLC, an unknown business entity and DOES 1
through 100, inclusive,

Defendant.

Case No. CVRI2000689

**DECLARATION OF ANA RAYOS IN
SUPPORT OF MOTION FOR FINAL
APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION AND
PAGA SETTLEMENT**

Date: February 19, 2025

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Judge: Hon. Harold W. Hopp

Dept.: 1

1 I, Ana Rayos, declare as follows:

2 1. I am over the age of eighteen, a California resident, Plaintiff and Proposed Class
3 Representative in the above-entitled matter. I submit this declaration in support of Plaintiff's Motion
4 for Final Approval of Class Action and PAGA Settlement and in support of Plaintiff's Motion for Class
5 Counsel Fees and Litigation Expenses Payment and Class Representative Service Payment. I have
6 personal knowledge of all the facts stated herein. I could and would competently testify under oath to
7 these facts in court if requested to do so.

8 2. I retained Class Counsel December 2020 and filed the lawsuit the same month. I filed the
9 case on behalf of myself and all persons employed by Defendant Restaurant Leadership Group, LLC
10 ("Defendant") in California and classified as non-exempt employees during the period of December 28,
11 2016, through March 12, 2024.

12 3. I worked for Defendant as a non-exempt employee in California from November 2013 to
13 January 2021. At all times during my employment, I was subject to Defendant's written policies and
14 procedures.

15 4. I filed the case because I believed my rights as an employee were violated by Defendant
16 and also the rights of other employees that worked for Defendant. Among other claims, I believe
17 Defendant failed to provide compliant meal and rest periods, failed to pay for all time worked, failed to
18 reimburse necessary business expenses, and failed to furnish accurate, itemized wage statements.

19 5. Before I initiated the case as a plaintiff and Class Representative, I spoke at length with
20 my attorneys. We discussed my work experience and how company policies were applied to me and
21 other employees. I provided the attorneys with documents they requested. We reviewed the documents
22 together and asked and answered many questions regarding my experience working for Defendant, the
23 litigation process, and about class actions generally.

24 6. During these conversations, I learned about my responsibilities as a plaintiff in the lawsuit
25 and as proposed a Class Representative. I understood that pursuing this action as a class action rather
26 than merely seeking my individual claims substantially increased the risk to me. Those risks included
27 the possibility of being held liable for Defendant's attorneys' fees and costs in a complex class action if
28 I lost the case. I also understood that as a Class Representative, I would be under increased scrutiny by

1 the attorneys and the Court because I needed to prove that I was an adequate class representative.
2 Further, I understood that I would lose some autonomy over my individual claims that I could not make
3 decisions for my sole benefit and that I needed to make every litigation decision with the best interests
4 of the Settlement Class in mind.

5 7. I also understood that pursuing this litigation created a very public record of my grievances
6 with Defendant which produced the risk that a future employer could hold it against me that I sued a
7 former employer.

8 8. I also knew that I was making a sacrifice in that I could have pursued my claims only on
9 an individual basis, likely obtaining a recovery greater than the portion of the class settlement I stand to
10 receive from this settlement. My attorneys explained to me that the net settlement value of my individual
11 claims may be greater than my ultimate recovery from the net class settlement amount.

12 9. Notwithstanding these risks and sacrifices, I decided to go through with the case because
13 I believed violations occurred and most employees would not know what their rights are and even if
14 they did, they would be apprehensive to file a lawsuit against their employer for fear of retaliation.

15 10. During the lawsuit I communicated on a regular basis with my attorneys. I reviewed status
16 updates from my attorneys and court filings on a regular basis, and spoke to my attorneys on the phone,
17 because I wanted to keep up with developments in the case which I understood was one of my duties as
18 a class representative.

19 11. **Review and Approval of Settlement:** Mediation was held on December 4, 2023. Even
20 though I could not attend, I was available by telephone to speak with my attorneys and did speak with
21 them regarding the mediation before it took place, as well as during the mediation itself. I also spoke
22 with my attorneys after the mediation and discussed the mediator's proposal which was ultimately
23 accepted. I was very satisfied with the terms of the settlement that was agreed to by the parties. I
24 reviewed and signed the settlement papers on July 9, 2024. After the Agreement was finalized, my
25 attorneys negotiated an amended settlement agreement which I signed on October 22, 2024.

26 12. **Participation:** Since I retained Class Counsel approximately sixty-one months ago, I have
27 been actively involved with this class action lawsuit performing the duties described above. While I did
28 not keep formal time records, I was in regular contact with my attorneys, attended hearings, reviewed

1 important court filings, and spent considerable time on the issues presented during the litigation and in
2 the settlement process. I estimate that I spent approximately 25-30 hours working on this case.

3 13. Also, my attorneys explained to me that the settlement process involved a two-step review
4 by the Court to determine whether the settlement was fair before ordering that the settlement be funded
5 and paid. I knew this process also involved notifying all class members of the settlement terms and of
6 their rights to make a claim for their settlement share, to opt out of the settlement or to object to the
7 settlement.

8 14. Ultimately, I believe I did the right thing in pursuing this case on behalf of the class who
9 now stand to receive substantial monetary payments as a result of this case and settlement. I also believe
10 that the requested Class Representative Service Payment in the amount of \$20,000 from the settlement
11 is fair compensation for the (1) the broad general release I executed, (2) the work I performed, (3) the
12 sacrifices made not pursuing this case individually, and (4) the risks I undertook.

13 15. In light of all the time and effort I have spent on this case, the sacrifice I have made, the
14 risks I undertook by suing a former employer, the exposure to being responsible for paying Defendant's
15 costs in the event we did not win the case, and in light of the size of the settlement, I believe the request
16 for \$20,000 as a service award is fair and reasonable.

17 16. Further, I have reviewed the terms of the Settlement, including the monetary terms. I
18 support my attorneys' application for a Class Counsel Fees and Litigation Expenses Payment in the
19 amount of \$730,000.00, comprised of \$700,000.00 for attorneys' fees (35% of the Gross Settlement
20 Amount) and up to \$30,000.00 for reimbursement of actually incurred litigation expenses.

21
22 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is
23 true and correct. Executed on 01/17/2025, at San Diego (Location/City), California.

24
25 By: 
26 ANA RAYOS
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