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and on behalf of others similarly situated and aggrieved employees
8 pursuant to the California Private Attorneys General Act

9 *[Additional counsel listed on next page]*

10 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

11 **FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

12
13 PETER J. GUTIERREZ, individually and on
behalf of others similarly situated and aggrieved
14 employees pursuant to the California Private
Attorneys General Act,

15 Plaintiff,

16 v.

17 UNIVAR SOLUTIONS USA INC., a
18 Washington corporation; UNIVAR
SOLUTIONS INC., a Delaware corporation; and
19 DOES 1 through 25, inclusive,

20 Defendants.

Case No.: 23STCV26851

Honorable William F. Highberger
Department SS10

**DECLARATION OF ALEXANDER J.
AROESTE IN SUPPORT OF
PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF CLASS
ACTION SETTLEMENT**

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15 Attorneys for Plaintiff PETER J. GUTIERREZ, individually
16 and on behalf of others similarly situated and aggrieved employees
17 pursuant to the California Private Attorneys General Act
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2 **DECLARATION OF ALEXANDER J. AROESTE**

3 I, Alexander J. Aroeste, declare:

4 1. I am an attorney licensed to practice law in the state of California and have been
5 admitted to practice before this Court. I am an attorney with the law firm Lavi & Ebrahimian, LLP,
6 Counsel for Plaintiff Peter J. Gutierrez (“Plaintiff”) in this action, and I am an attorney assigned to
7 work on this case. Based on my assignment to this case and familiarity with the file and action in this
8 matter, I have personal knowledge of the matters stated herein and if called and sworn as a witness, I
9 would and could competently testify under oath thereto. I am a member in good standing of all State
10 and Federal District Courts of California.

11 2. This Declaration is submitted in support of Plaintiff’s Motion for Preliminary
12 Approval of the Class Action and PAGA Settlement.

13 **EXPERIENCE OF CLASS COUNSEL:**

14 3. The attorneys at our office are experienced and qualified to evaluate the class claims
15 and to evaluate settlement versus trial on a fully informed basis, and to evaluate the viability of the
16 defenses. The partner of the firm who was lead counsel on this matter, Mr. Joseph Lavi, has been
17 practicing law for over twenty years. Mr. Vincent Granberry, another senior attorney with our firm,
18 graduated from Arizona State University Sandra Day O’Conner College of Law in 2010 and has been
19 practicing law for over thirteen years. Mr. Lavi, Mr. Granberry, myself, and the other members of
20 my firm, have almost exclusively practiced in the area of labor and employment law. Mr. Lavi has
21 handled numerous cases in all aspects of employment and labor law, including state and federal class
22 actions, including wrongful termination, retaliation, and harassment actions. Mr. Granberry has been
23 in practice with the law firm of Lavi & Ebrahimian, LLP since April 2014. Super Lawyers Magazine
24 has selected Mr. Granberry as a Southern California Rising Star in 2016 through 2025 in the area of
25 Plaintiff’s employment litigation and as one of the Up-and-Coming 100 attorneys in the same field
26 in 2018 and again from 2020 - 2024. Mr. Granberry has been involved in numerous cases in all
27 aspects from trial through trial and appeal, including California and Federal class actions, wrongful
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1 termination, discrimination, harassment and retaliation cases. Mr. Lavi has tried both labor and
2 employment cases in State and Federal court, and has argued before various Court of Appeals, on
3 employment issues such as validity of Arbitration Agreements, Application of Res Judicata in class
4 action cases as well as other employment issues. Mr. Lavi has also been a panelist and/or speaker for
5 various Employment Law Continuing Legal Education Panels on issues of employment law trials,
6 how to proceed and conduct trials as well as proving and winning punitive damages. Mr. Lavi has
7 also been named a Southern California Super Lawyer in the area of Plaintiff's employment litigation-
8 class action from 2011-2025. Mr. Lavi has been approved as class counsel by both federal and state
9 Courts. Mr. Lavi, Mr. Granberry, myself, and the other attorneys at Lavi & Ebrahimian who are
10 available to assist us in this case if needed are fully capable of adequately and fairly representing
11 Plaintiffs and the proposed class in this matter. Lavi & Ebrahimian, LLP, has been appointed Class
12 Counsel in over fifty contested proceedings including the following:

- 13 a. *Ischak v. Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
14 No. BC343535;
- 15 b. *Santana v. El Pollo Loco, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
16 BC369846;
- 17 c. *Edlin, et al. v. Fuddruckers, Inc.*, United States District Court, Central District
18 of California, Case No. CV-07-3678-ABC;
- 19 d. *Chavez, et al. vs. CEC Entertainment, Inc. d/b/a Chukee-Cheeses*, Los Angeles
20 Superior Court Case No. BC380996;
- 21 e. *Bustamante, et al. v. Teamone Employment Specialists*, Los Angeles Superior
22 Court Case No. BC383266;
- 23 f. *Cervantes, et al. v. Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, Inc.*, Alameda Superior Court
24 Case No. RG 0265835;
- 25 g. *Seng Savang v. Club One Casino*; Fresno Superior Court Case No.
26 05CECG02189;
- 27 h. *Norman, et al. v. Movado Retail Group, Inc.*, United States District Court,
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1 Central District of California, Case No. CV08-06691 SVW (PLA);

2 i. *Shand v. G.A.L.A., Inc. dba Giorgio Armani*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
3 No. BC342588;

4 g. *Solis v. Plycraft Industries, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
5 BC374816;

6 h. *Campos v. HWB Carwash, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
7 BC378990;

8 i. *Acosta, et al. v. Texwood Industries*, United States District Court, Central
9 District of California, Case No. CV07-3237-DDP (PLAX);

10 h. *Arevalo v. Gruma Corporation*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
11 BC410322;

12 j. *Burrola v. American Promotional Events*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
13 No. BC412315;

14 k. *Cortez v. Trader Distribution Services*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
15 BC397208;

16 l. *Cueva v. Allied Industries, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
17 BC399431;

18 m. *Del Toro v. Petco Animal Supplies, Inc.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No.
19 37-2009-00103626-CU-OE-CTL;

20 n. *Garcia v. Home Cooking, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
21 BC451148;

22 o. *Alcantar v. Amerimax Building Products, Inc.*, United States District Court,
23 Central District of California, Case No. CV 10-8916 DDP (CWx);

24 p. *Arancivias v. Clougherty Packaging, LLC dba Farmer John*, Los Angeles
25 Superior Court Case No. BC432406;

26 q. *Barajas v. Menzies Aviation, Inc.*, United States District Court, Central District
27 of California, Case No CV-10-02315-JEM;

1 r. *Barrera v. BHFC Operating, LLC dba Bottega Louie*, Los Angeles Superior
2 Court Case No. BC462603;
3 s. *Camacho v. American Textile Maintenance Co.*, Los Angeles Superior
4 Court Case No. BC452570;
5 t. *Cortes v. Monsanto Company*, Ventura Superior Court Case No. 56-2010-
6 00366952-CU-OE-VTA;
7 u. *Escobar v. Aero-Electric Connector, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
8 No. BC421009;
9 v. *Gomez v. Bacara Resort & Spa*, Santa Barbara Superior Court Case No.
10 1341987;
11 w. *Gonzalez v. Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court
12 Case No. BC425708;
13 x. *Gonzalez v. Burrtec Waste Industries, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
14 No. BC436879;
15 y. *Gutierrez v. Visterra Credit Union*, Riverside Superior Court Case No.
16 RIC10020183;
17 z. *Hernandez v. Kruse & Son, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
18 BC411849;
19 aa. *Lopez v. Tecno Industrial Engineering*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
20 BC411134;
21 bb. *Lowanga v. Continental Currency Services, Inc.*, Orange County Superior
22 Court Case No. 30-2011-0044011-CU-OE-CXC;
23 cc. *Aguilar v. PLS Financial Services, Inc.*, United States District Court, Central
24 District of California, Case No. CV 10-0415 ODW (FMOx)
25 dd. *Lozada v. Classic Party Rentals, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
26 BC443792;
27 ee. *Madrid v. OPI Products, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
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1 BC451489;

2 ff. *Martinez v. J. Fletcher Creamer & Son, Inc.*, United States District Court Case
3 No. CV 10-0968-PSG-FMOX;

4 gg. *Martinez v. Administaff Companies II, L.P.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
5 No. BC425799;

6 hh. *Martinez v. Morgans Hotel Group Management, LLC*, Los Angeles Superior
7 Court Case No. BC446744;

8 jj. *Sanchez v. La Brea Bakery, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
9 BC456420;

10 ii. *Montenegro v. Ruggeri Marble and Granite, Inc.*, United States District Court,
11 Central District of California, Case No. CV-10-00711 JFW (PLAx);

12 kk. *Reed v. 99 Cents Only Stores*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
13 BC436793;

14 ll. *Santos v. Noble Management Group-California, LLC*, United States District
15 Court, Central District of California, Case No. CV 10-2594 DSF (VBKx)

16 mm. *Taylor v. U.S. Healthworks Holding Company, Inc.*, Orange County Superior
17 Court Case No. 30-2011-00473505;

18 nn. *Valencia Diaz v. Gene Wheeler Farms, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
19 No. BC436235;

20 oo. *Zad-Behtooie v. Valley Village*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
21 BC451490;

22 pp. *Bell v. Aidells Sausage Company, Inc.*, Alameda Superior Court Case No.
23 RG10523946;

24 qq. *Negrete v. Cenveo, Inc.*, United States District Court, Central District of
25 California, Case No. CV 11-09543 DSF (MRWx);

26 rr. *Bejar v. Exopack-Ontario, Inc.*, Orange County Superior Court Case No. 30-
27 2011-00518396-CU-OE-CXC;

1 ss. *Aguilar v. PLS Financial Services, Inc.*, United States District Court, Central
2 District of California, Case No. CV 10-0415 ODW (FMOx);

3 tt. *Sparks v. Larry Flynt dba Hustler Casino*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
4 No. BC320172;

5 uu. *Morris v. Chevron Stations, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No.
6 BC361380;

7 vv. *Marino v. BP West Coast Products, LLC*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case
8 No. BC357987.

9 **CONTRIBUTION OF PLAINTIFF AND REASONABLENESS OF THE REQUESTED**

10 **ENHANCEMENT AWARD:**

11 4. It is imperative that Plaintiff obtain just compensation for the time, effort and risk
12 associated with his fiduciary duties as a class representative and named Plaintiff. I believe that the
13 named Plaintiff performed considerable services on behalf of the Class, since he searched for an
14 attorney, collected and gathered the requested documents and information, wage statements and/or
15 pay stubs, met with us, made himself available each and every single time that we called his in order
16 to answer questions about Defendant UNIVAR SOLUTIONS USA INC.'s and Defendant UNIVAR
17 SOLUTIONS INC.'s ("Defendants") policies and procedures produced in discovery or discussed
18 during conversations with opposing counsel or raised in pleadings filed in this matter. The named
19 Plaintiff provided Class Counsel with factual information needed to prepare the complaints. He
20 collected relevant documents and produced those documents to Class Counsel. He continued to be
21 engaged in continued settlement negotiations that were ultimately required to reach a settlement in
22 this case. I believe that the service award request of \$10,000 to Plaintiff ("Class Representative
23 Service Payment") as a service award is fair and reasonable. As such, the requested payment is
24 warranted for his time and effort when the class members are able to receive significant benefits for
25 his efforts, as well as the fact that he put himself at significant risk for liability for costs in this matter
26 if Defendants were the prevailing party in the litigation as well as for retaliation by other employers
27 who may discover and find it to be unappealing that he was class representative in a lawsuit against
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1 Defendants, his former employers. At this point in the approval process, the requested service
2 payment should be approved to allow the Class Members an opportunity to object to the requested
3 Class Representative Service Payment.

4 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is
5 true and correct. Executed this 9th day of October 2025, at Beverly Hills, California.

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7 /s/ Alexander J. Aroeste
8 Alexander J. Aroeste
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