1 2 3 4 5 6	Julie A. Hamill (272742) Hamill Law & Consulting 904 Silver Spur Road, #287 Rolling Hills Estates, California, 90274 (424) 265-0529 julie@juliehamill-law.com Attorney for Petitioner and Plaintiff ALLIANCE OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY PARE	ENTS
7 8	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE FOR THE COUNTY	
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	ALLIANCE OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY PARENTS, an unincorporated association Petitioner and Plaintiff, vs. COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH; MUNTU DAVIS, in his official capacity as Health Officer for the County of Los Angeles; BARBARA FERRER, in her official capacity as Director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health; and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive, Respondents and Defendants.	Case No.: 22STCP02772 CLOSING BRIEF OF THE ALLIANCE OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY PARENTS [NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITY AND REQUEST FOR JUDICIAL NOTICE FILED HEREWITH] Hearing Date: December 1, 2023 Time: 10:00 a.m. Dept.: 69 Judge: William F. Fahey COMPLAINT FILED: July 26, 2022 TRIAL DATE: October 16, 2023
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ALLIANCE CLOSING BRIEF

1	Since March 2020, we may have experienced the greatest intrusions on civil liberties in the			
2	peacetime history of this country. (Arizona v Mayorkas (2023)U.S [143 S.Ct. 1312, 1314].)			
3	(statement by Gorsuch, J.).) Executive officials across the country issued emergency decrees on a			
4	breathtaking scale. (Id). While issuing emergency health orders, Defendant Los Angeles County			
5	Department of Public Health ("LACDPH") Director Barbara Ferrer, who oversees 10.3 million			
6	residents and a two-billion-dollar budget (Vol. 1, 44:15-18; Vol. 3, 449:14-15), demonstrated			
7	hypersensitivity to criticism and casual disregard for constitutional rights. (Exh. 36B pp. 3, 4, Exh.			
8	49B, Exh. 55, p. 1, Exh. 262 p. 1, Exh. 273, p. 1, Exh. 315; Vol. 1 121:22-25, 123:1-10, 123:11-21,			
9	175:3-28, 176:1-3, Vol. 3 527:16-28, 528:1-3.)			
10	Recent litigation revealed widespread campaigns by government agencies to suppress			
11	expression of disfavored views on private digital platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.			
12	(See, e.g., Murthy v Missouri (2023) 601 U.S (dis. opn. of Alito, J.). In Missouri v. Biden, the			
13	Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals found unrelenting pressure from government officials likely had the			
14	intended result of suppressing millions of protected free speech postings by Americans. (Missouri v.			
15	Biden ("Biden") (5th Cir. Oct. 3, 2023) F. 4th,, 2023 WL 6425697 at p. 62\(^1\).			
16	Defendants here engaged in a similar censorship campaign, albeit on a much smaller scale.			
17	Like the federal agencies involved in Biden, Defendants justify their actions as "protecting the			
18	public from misinformation," but evidence shows "misinformation" is subjective. (Vol. 1, 83:24-26,			
19	Vol. 2 222:10-18, 223:1, Vol. 3 470:5-16.) LACDPH's true objective—establishing an orthodoxy			
20	on an issue of public concern by quashing dissident speech—is constitutionally impermissible.			
21	(E.g., W. Va. State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette (1943) 319 U.S. 624.) LACDPH wants to be the single			
22	source of truth. (Vol. 1, 87:20-28, 88:1.)			
23	As part of its censorship campaign, LACDPH disabled public comments on their social			
24	media sites, though they were sporadically left open. (Exh. 55, p. 1, 188:19-28, 189:1; Stip. Facts			
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26	¹ The Fifth Circuit granted Plaintiffs and Appellees' petition for panel rehearing, withdrew the September 8, 2023			
27	opinion and substituted the October 3, 2023 opinion in its place. Upon rehearing, the Fifth Circuit determined that "CISA also likely violated the First Amendment" and added CISA to the injunction. (p. 59). On October 20, 2023, the			
28	United States Supreme Court granted Respondents' application for stay and petition for certiorari. Copies of the October 3, 2023 opinion and Supreme Court Order on Application for Stay are attached to the Notice of Supplemental Authority filed herewith.			

27.) Closing down the public comments cut off the public's ability to share critical information.² 2 For example, Phil Kerpen's Tweets sharing the LAC+USC video link were prominently featured in 3 the replies to LACDPH tweets. (Exh. 61 pp. 4-7, 11, 13-15, 17, Exh. 62, pp. 3, 17, 18, 39, Exh. 67 pp. 4, 9, 10.) If a person knows what they are searching for, they can find the link just like Lespron 4 5 did via Google search. (Vol. 4 593:26-28, 594:1-28, 595:1-4.) A person going to LACDPH to find information about the pandemic and public health guidance, however, will not see the LAC+USC 7 videos because LACDPH's comments are closed and the posts from July 2022 are no longer visible 8 on LACDPH's timeline. (Vol. 2 297:27-28, 298:1-4.) 9 Defendants' social media sites are centralized locations where, prior to July 30, 2022, people 10 with a variety of viewpoints shared information about public health and civil liberties. (Vol. 3, 11 354:24-28, 355:1-28, 356:1-11.) Alliance created an alternative account to quote Tweet LACDPH posts with comments open to allow discussion ("Alt Account"), and Defendants had it suspended. 12 13 (Stip. Facts 15 -24, Exh. 5, p. 1; Vol. 2 310:7-25, 312:22-28.) Alliance members tweeting 14 disfavored viewpoints regarding public health matters have also had their accounts suspended. (Vol. 15 3 397:20-28, 398:1-19, 408:24-28, 411:14-15.) 16 Defendants' justifications for censorship defy written evidence and prior testimony, and do 17 not excuse constitutional violations. Defendants gave several reasons for disabling comments, 18 including concerns about threats, bullying, harassment, and misinformation. (Exh. 37 p. 1; Vol. 1 19 151:21-24, Vol. 2 220:24-28, 221:1-9, 27-28, 222:1-9.) What LACDPH calls "threats," "bullying," 20 and "harassment," however, is legitimate criticism of the government, and "misinformation" and 21 "falsehoods" are simply information that conflicts with Defendants' statements. (E.g., Exhs. 61, 62, 22 63, 65, 67; Vol. 1 66:6-13, 68:10-18, 92:12-18, Vol. 2 222:10-28, 223:1, Vol. 3 470:5-16, Vol. 4 23 559:16-23, 556:18-28.) Defendants closed a public forum to quash criticism of the government and 24 speech that conflicts with Defendants' statements. (Vol. 3 369:22-28, 370:1-2.) 25 26

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² While Alliance members can still post on their own accounts, they do not have the same audience as the LACDPH accounts, which includes hundreds of thousands of followers and members of the media. (Vol. 1, 123:22-27; Vol. 3, 357:4-14, 387:4, 393:22-28, 394:1-9, 412:18-28, 413:14-15.)

I. Defendants Engaged in Viewpoint Discrimination by Disabling Comments to Suppress Disfavored Views.

Until July 2022, LACDPH social media pages and posts served as a designated public forum. (Joint Statement of Stipulated Facts for Trial ("Stip. Facts"), Fact 28.) Defendants contend that by disabling comments, they converted designated public fora to limited public fora.³ The evidence shows, however, Defendants disabled comments to quiet the barrage of dissenting opinions and criticism of LACDPH. (E.g., Exhs. 61, 62, 63, 65, 67.) Defendants closed comments to suppress expression because LACDPH opposed the speakers' viewpoints, in violation of the constitutionally protected right to free speech. (See *Perry Educ. Ass'n v. Perry Local Educators' Ass'n* (1983) 460 U.S. 37, 46 ["[T]he state may reserve the forum for its intended purposes, communicative or otherwise, as long as the regulation on speech is reasonable and not an effort to suppress expression merely because public officials oppose the speaker's view."].) Evidence of viewpoint discrimination and LACDPH efforts to be the single source of truth on Covid includes the following:

1. Announcement of a Mask Mandate Ignites Criticism. On July 7, 2022, Ferrer announced a likely return to an indoor mask mandate. (Vol. 1 14:30 – 14:41; Exh. 34.) As a result, in July 2022, LACDPH social media sites were flooded with comments from people upset about the possibility of another mandate. (Vol. 1 124:14-28, 125:1; Exhs. 61, 62, 63, 65, 67.)

2. County Physicians Question Virus Severity and Need for Mask Mandate.

Commenters posted links to a July 13, 2022 Los Angeles County + University of Southern California Medical Center ("LAC+USC") recorded town hall meeting, wherein physicians employed by the County of Los Angeles discussed a decrease in severity of the virus, which conflicted with Ferrer's representations. (Exh. 35, Exh. 35B; Exh 61 pp. 4-7, 11, 13-15, 17; Exh. 62 pp. 3, 16-18, 39; Exh 67 pp. 4, 9,10.) The physicians said, "public health is scared" and "certainly

³ Defendants failed to create a "limited public forum" because they have not exercised clear and consistent control over the interactive portions of the social media pages. (*Garnier v. O'Connor-Ratcliff* (9th Cir. 2022) 41 F.4th 1158, 1178, cert. granted 143 S. Ct. 1779; Vol. 2, 294:2, Exhs. 47, 283, 286, 287 p. 2, 289, 297, 300, 303, 306, 312, 324.) This lawsuit prompted Defendants to attempt to comply with stated policy, but evidence shows consistent failure. (Exh. 32, Exh. 37, Exh. 229, Vol. 2, 225:22-27, 238:1-28, 239:1-18, 240:20-28, 241:1-6, 242:2-6, Vol. 4, 588:17-28, 589:1-3.)

"requiring urgent action." (Exh. 59 p. 4.) Morrow complained about "misinformation going around

Twitter. On July 26, 2022, in another Twitter Exchange email, Morrow alerted Twitter to matters

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quashing disfavored speech was threatened by this new forum, and LACDPH aggressively followed

up with Twitter until the account was permanently suspended. (Exh. 59, pp. 1-3, Exh 21 pp. 3,4, 8.)

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LACDPH Significantly Encouraged or Coerced Twitter to Suspend the Alt Account

With respect to suspension of Alliance's Alt Account, this Court determined in its October 3, 2023 summary judgment ruling that *Biden* is well reasoned, highly persuasive and should be applied here. The Biden case holds that government actors violate the First Amendment when they significantly encourage or coerce social media platforms to take adverse action against parties who express disfavored viewpoints. The Fifth Circuit described two separate and distinct ways to satisfy the "close nexus" test: 1) significant encouragement or 2) coercion. (Biden at pp. 33, 34.)

A. Coercion

The Fifth Circuit endorsed the "four factor test" to determine whether coercion is present the same test relied upon by the Second and Ninth Circuit Courts of Appeal. In applying those factors to the evidence in Biden, the Fifth Circuit concluded that defendant government agencies coerced social media platforms to take adverse actions against plaintiffs. Coercion is more subtle than encouragement, not black and white, and difficult to parse out from persuasion. (Biden at pp. 34, 36.) Evidence of coercion in this case includes the following:

1. Word choice and tone. Morrow was professional but persistent in his communications to Twitter. (Stip. Facts 6, 15-24, Exh. 21, Exh. 59.) Morrow, who publicly boasts about his relationship with Congressman Schiff (Exh. 52, p. 4, Vol. 2, 168:10-28, 169:15-23, Vol. 4 519:23-28), emphasized his connection to Congressman Schiff and staffer Boland, copying Boland on his email to Twitter. (Exh. 21, p. 14.) At the time of the Twitter Exchange, Congressman Schiff was Chair of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence ("HPSCI"). (Vol. 4, 611:16-28, 612:1-9.) As HPSCI Chairman, Schiff had independent authority to commence investigations and authorize congressional subpoenas. (See U.S. Congress, House Committee on Rules, Rules Adopted by the Committees of the House of Representatives, committee print, 117th Cong., 1st sess., RCP 117-24 (Washington: GPO, 2022) p. 282, Rules 9(a), 10(a) ("HPSCI Rules"; Request for Judicial Notice ("RJN") Exh. A.)

Morrow included Boland's name in all capital letters in the subject line throughout the Twitter Exchange. (Exh. 21, pp. 1-14; Exh. 59.) By naming Schiff and Boland in his emails,

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⁴ In *Biden*, government defendants threatened social media companies with "adverse government action like increased regulation, antitrust enforcement, and changes to Section 230." (*Biden* at p. 42.)

Twitter. **B. Significant Encouragement**

To constitute "significant encouragement," there must be such a "close nexus" between the parties that the government is practically "responsible" for the challenged decision. (*Biden* at p. 30.) There must be some exercise of active, meaningful control on the part of the government over the private party's challenged decision. (*Biden* at p. 31.) The Fifth Circuit's reading of what encouragement means under the close nexus test tracks with the Ninth Circuit's test. (*Biden* at p. 33, citing *O'Handley v. Weber*, 62 F. 4th 1145, 1158 (9th Cir. 2023), *cert. pending*, No 22-1199 (filed on June 8, 2023) ("*O'Handley*").) Evidence of significant encouragement here includes:

with perceived and actual ability from Congressman Schiff—at Morrow's request—to commence

an investigation, issue a subpoena, or propose regulatory changes that could negatively impact

- 1. Active meaningful control over the private party's decision (Biden p. 30). Here, there were 15 emails, and suspension by Twitter of the Alt Account. (Exh. 21, pp. 1-16; Exh. 59.) When Morrow and Lespron's impersonation reports succeeded in permanently suspending the Alt Account, Morrow reported more plainly satirical accounts and tweets containing disfavored speech to be suspended for impersonation. (Exh. 21, pp. 9, 10, 16.) Morrow did not just use the standard reporting feature in the application he used a private backchannel to Twitter expediters for government requests. (Exh. 21, p. 13, Vol. 1, 150:28, 151:1-3.)
- 2. Consistent and consequential interaction with platforms. Morrow was persistent, so much so that he apologized for "all the requests." (Exh. 21, p. 9.) Like in *Biden*, Morrow was monitoring Twitter's content moderation activities, and had consistent and consequential interaction with Twitter. (*Biden* at p. 52; Exh. 21, Exh. 59, pp. 1-3, Vol. 4, 590:6-28, 591:10-28, 592:1-27.)
- 3. More than regulation of an industry, passive approval by regulatory entity of decision by regulated business, and uninvolved oversight from the government (Biden at pp. 30, 31). Here, Morrow directly involved himself with Twitter's process via incessant emails to Twitter. Every time the Alt Account complied with Twitter directives, Morrow immediately followed up until the account was permanently suspended. (Stip. Facts 6-9, 15-24, Exh. 5, pp. 1-4; Exh. 59, p. 1.) Then, Morrow went after other critical accounts for impersonation. (Exh. 21, pp. 9, 10, 16.)

1	4. Overwhelms private party's choice (Biden at p. 33, citing O'Handley). In O'Handley,	
2	defendants flagged plaintiff's tweet once with no follow-up. (O'Handley, 62 F. 4th 1145, 1157-58.)	
3	Here, LACDPH followed up with Twitter multiple times. Morrow reported accounts without	
4	success, and then escalated to the private government backchannel using Schiff's connections. (Vol.	
5	1, 150:17-21, Vol. 2 224:1-16, Exh. 21, pp. 5, 13.) Absent his persistence and invocation of Schiff's	
6	name, the Alt Account would not have been suspended.	
7	In O'Handley there was no indication—whether via tone, content, or otherwise—that the	
8	state would retaliate against inaction given the insubstantial relationship. (<i>Biden</i> p. 51.) Here,	
9	however, we have a text from Boland saying that if he doesn't receive a response Boland will	
10	escalate in the DC office—meaning with Congressman Schiff. (Exh. 26.)	
11	III. <u>Conclusion</u>	
12	Loss of the constitutional right to free speech, for even minimal periods of time,	
13	unquestionably constitutes irreparable injury. (Biden, p. 63.) "If there is any fixed star in our	
14	constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox	
15	in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion" (W. Va. State Bd of Educ. v.	
16	Barnette, supra, 319 U.S. at p. 642.) Defendants in this case violated Alliance members' right to	
17	speak and receive information by engaging in viewpoint discrimination, closing a public forum for	
18	viewpoint discriminatory reasons, and significantly encouraging or coercing Twitter to suspend the	
19	Alt Account.	
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21	Dated: November 16, 2023 Hamill Law & Consulting	
22	D (-/ I-1)- A II II ON A A (1)	
23	By: _/s/ Julie A. Hamill Julie A. Hamill	
24	Attorney for Petitioner Alliance of Los Angeles County Parents	
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1	PROOF OF SERVICE	
234	I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California, I am over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action. My business address is 904 Silver Spur Road, #287, Rolling Hills Estates, California 90274. My e-service address is julie@juliehamill-law.com On November 16, 2023 I served the foregoing document: ALLIANCE OF LOS	
5	ANGELES COUNTY PARENTS CLOSING BRIEF on the interested parties in this action.	
6	☐ By placing a true copy thereof enclosed in a sealed envelope addressed as follows:	
7	By attaching a true copy via electronic transmission addressed as follows:	
8 9 10 11 12 13	Valerie Alter, VAlter@sheppardmullin.com Kent Raygor, KRaygor@sheppardmullin.com Zachary Golda, zgolda@sheppardmullin.com Sheppard Mullin 1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1600 Los Angeles, California 90067-6055 Attorneys for Respondents and Defendants County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health Barbara Ferrer, Muntu Davis	
14 15	https://platform.onelegal.com/ selecting the proper functions to electronically serve the person(s)	
16 17 18 19	(BY MAIL) As follows: I am "readily familiar" with the firm's practice of collection and processing correspondence for mailing. Under that practice it would be deposited with the U.S. postal service on that same day with postage thereon fully prepaid at Rancho Palos Verdes, California in the ordinary course of business. I am aware that on motion of the party served, service is presumed invalid if postal cancellation date or postage meter date is more than one day after the date of deposit for mailing in affidavit.	
20	STATE) I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the above is true and correct.	
21 22 22	Executed on November 16, 2023 at Rancho Palos Verdes, California.	
23 24	/s/ Justin	
	Julie A. Hamill	
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27 28		
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