

FILED  
08 MAY 20 PM 3:58

CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

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10 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO**

11 **NONI GOTTI,**

Case No. 37-2008-00070657-CU-CR-SC

12 **Plaintiff,**

**CIVIL COMPLAINT:**

**DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES IN  
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

[42 U.S.C. 12182(a) ET. SEQ; CIVIL  
CODE 51, 52, 54, 54.1, 54.3]

13 v.

14 **EDIK ESMAILIAN DBA BEST PAWN  
SHOP; And DOES 1 THROUGH 10,  
15 Inclusive**

**UNLIMITED CIVIL CASE –  
PERMANENT INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

16 **Defendants.**

17 **NAMED DEFENDANTS AND NAMED PLAINTIFF**

18  
19 1. Plaintiff is informed, believes and thereon alleges that Defendants are, and, at all times  
20 mentioned herein, were, a business or corporation or franchise organized and existing and/or  
21 doing business under the laws of the State of California. Plaintiff is informed and believes and  
22 thereon alleges that Defendant EDIK ESMAILIAN DBA BEST PAWN SHOP is the owner,  
23 operator, and/or lessor/lessee of the real property and the public accommodation located thereon  
24 at the Property Address: 130 W SAN YSIDRO BLVD, SAN DIEGO, CA 92173. Defendant  
25 EDIK ESMAILIAN DBA BEST PAWN SHOP is located at 130 W SAN YSIDRO BLVD, SAN  
26 DIEGO, CA 92173.

27 2. The words Plaintiff and Plaintiffs as used herein specifically include NONI GOTTI.

28 3. Defendants Does 1 through 10, were at all times relevant herein subsidiaries, employers,

1 employees, agents, of Defendant EDIK ESMAILIAN DBA BEST PAWN SHOP. Plaintiff is  
2 ignorant of the true names and capacities of Defendants sued herein as Does 1 through 10,  
3 inclusive, and therefore sues these Defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will pray leave  
4 of the court to amend this complaint to allege the true names and capacities of the Does when  
5 ascertained.

6 4. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendants and each of them  
7 herein were, at all times relevant to the action, the owner, lessor, lessee, franchiser, franchisee,  
8 general partner, limited partner, agent, employee, representing partner, or joint venturer of the  
9 remaining Defendants and were acting within the course and scope of that relationship. Plaintiff  
10 is further informed and believe, and thereon allege, that each of the Defendants herein gave  
11 consent to, ratified, and/or authorized the acts alleged herein to each of the remaining Defendants.

#### 12 CONCISE SET OF FACTS

13 5. Plaintiff NONI GOTTI (hereinafter "Plaintiff") has physical and mental impairments and  
14 due to these impairments she has successfully learned to walk with a service animal. Plaintiff  
15 said physical and mental impairments substantially limit one or more of the following major life  
16 activities including but not limited to: walking and clinical depression. Plaintiff has a long  
17 history of mental impairments. Plaintiff's doctor required her to travel with a service dog as a  
18 non-medicated treatment for her conditions. Defendants refused Plaintiff entrance due to the dog  
19 or have a policy prohibiting service dogs.

20 6. Plaintiff has physical and mental impairments because their conditions affect one or more  
21 of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, and/or  
22 cardiovascular. Further, Plaintiff said physical impairments substantially limits one or more of  
23 the following major life activities. In addition, Plaintiff cannot perform one or more of the said  
24 major life activities in the manner, speed, and duration when compared to the average person.  
25 Moreover, Plaintiff has a history of or has been classified as having a physical impairment as  
26 required by 42 U.S.C. § 12102(2)(A).

27 7. On May 18, 2008, Plaintiff NONI GOTTI desired to visit Defendants' public  
28

1 accommodation facilities located at Property Address: 130 W SAN YSIDRO BLVD, SAN  
2 DIEGO, CA 92173 to utilize their goods and/or services. When Plaintiff NONI GOTTI desired  
3 to patronize Defendants' public accommodation facilities, she was unable to use and/or had  
4 difficulty using the public accommodations' facilities including but not limited to the barriers to  
5 access listed herein and said facilities were not accessible because they failed to comply with  
6 ADA Access Guidelines For Buildings and Facilities (hereafter referred to as "ADAAG" and  
7 codified in 28 C.F.R. Part 36, App. A) and/or California's Title 24 Building Code Requirements.  
8 Defendants failed to remove barriers to equal access within their public accommodation facilities  
9 as required.

10 8. Plaintiff NONI GOTTI personally experienced difficulty with said access barriers as listed  
11 herein to the present Complaint at Defendants' public accommodation facilities located on the  
12 Property and/or has knowledge of said access barriers and is presently deterred from accessing  
13 the public accommodation. Plaintiff alleges that these known barriers to access are not an  
14 exhaustive list of the barriers to access that exist at Defendants' facilities.

15 9. Defendants failed to provide auxiliary aids and services that are necessary to ensure equal  
16 access to the goods, services, privileges, or accommodations that it offers. Title 28, part 36.303  
17 of Code of Federal Regulations states:

18 (a) General. A public accommodation shall take those steps that may be necessary to ensure that  
19 no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated  
20 differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services, unless the  
21 public accommodation can demonstrate that taking those steps would fundamentally alter the  
22 nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations being offered  
23 or would result in an undue burden, i.e., significant difficulty or expense.

24 (b) Examples. The term "auxiliary aids and services" includes:

25 (1) Qualified interpreters, notetakers, computer-aided transcription services, written  
26 materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening devices, assistive listening  
27 systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, closed caption decoders, open and  
28

1 closed captioning, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDD's), videotext  
2 displays, or other effective methods of making aurally delivered materials available to  
3 individuals with hearing impairments;

4 (2) Qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Brailled materials, large print  
5 materials, or other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to  
6 individuals with visual impairments;

7 (3) Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices; and

8 (4) Other similar services and actions.

9 (c) Effective communication. A public accommodation shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids  
10 and services where necessary to ensure effective communication with individuals with  
11 disabilities.

12 10. Plaintiff can prove these barriers as Plaintiff conducted a preliminary survey of  
13 Defendants' facility. Plaintiff specifically alleges that Defendants knew, to a substantial  
14 certainty, that the architectural barriers precluded equal access. First, Plaintiff will prove that  
15 Defendants had actual knowledge that the architectural barriers precluded equal access and that  
16 the noncompliance with ADAAG as to accessible entrances was intentional. Second, due to the  
17 abundance of ADA information and constant news covers of ADA lawsuits, Defendants had  
18 actual knowledge of the ADA and decided deliberately not to remove architectural barriers.  
19 Third, Defendants have no plans to remodel. Fourth, Defendants had actual knowledge of ADA  
20 given all the ADA public awareness campaigns, the abundance of free ADA information and the  
21 media's constant ADA coverage. Fifth, a human being acting for the defendants made a  
22 conscious decision as to how to proceed given the presence of the architectural barriers. Plaintiff  
23 alleges any alternative methods preclude integration of disabled patrons, as it requires them to use  
24 second-class facilities. Also, expert testimony will show the facility contained inaccessible  
25 features. Plaintiff alleges businesses often state that they have few customers with disabilities.  
26 Plaintiff alleges such customers avoid patronizing inaccessible businesses and are deterred from  
27 patronizing such businesses.  
28

1 11. The Plaintiff went to the property 130 SAN YSIDRO BLVD W, SAN DIEGO. The  
2 property has no International Symbol of Accessibility signage at the entrance, the counter exceeds  
3 36 inches and there are loose mats. Also, the interior accessible route is less than 36 inches.

4 12. Plaintiff intends to return to Defendants' public accommodation facilities in the immediate  
5 future. Plaintiff was deterred and is presently deterred from returning due to her knowledge of  
6 the barriers to access that exist at Defendants' facilities.

7 13. Pursuant to federal and state law, Defendants are required to remove barriers to their  
8 existing facilities. Further, Defendants had actual knowledge of their barrier removal duties  
9 under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Civil Code before January 26, 1992. Also,  
10 Defendants should have known that individuals with disabilities are not required to give notice to  
11 a governmental agency before filing suit alleging Defendants failed to remove architectural  
12 barriers.

13 14. Plaintiff believes and herein alleges Defendants' facilities have access violations not  
14 directly experienced by Plaintiff which would preclude or limit access by Plaintiff potentially  
15 including but not limited to violations of the ADA, ADA Accessibility Guidelines (Codified in 28  
16 C.F.R. Part 36, App. A) and Title 24 of the California Building Code. Plaintiff alleges  
17 Defendants are required to utilize the ADA checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal  
18 approved by the United States Department of Justice and created by Adaptive Environments.  
19 Plaintiff is entitled to injunctive relief to remove all barriers to access that are related to her  
20 disability even those barriers that are only known to exist but are not directly experienced by  
21 plaintiff. *Doran v 7-Eleven Inc*, 2007 U.S.App.Lexis 26143 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir 2007).

22 15. Based on these facts, Plaintiff alleges she was discriminated against each time he  
23 patronized and/or was deterred from patronizing Defendants' facilities. Plaintiff was extremely  
24 upset due to Defendants' conduct.

25 16. Plaintiff is not required to provide notice to the defendants prior to filing a complaint  
26 and/or to recover attorney fees and costs. *Botosan v. Paul McNally Realty*, 216 F.3d 827, 832  
27 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir 2000). *Skaff v Meridien*, 2007 U.S. App. LEXIS 25516 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir 2007).  
28

1 **WHAT CLAIMS ARE PLAINTIFF ALLEGING AGAINST EACH NAMED**

2 **DEFENDANT**

3 17. Defendants EDIK ESMAILIAN DBA BEST PAWN SHOP and Does 1 through 10 will  
4 be referred to collectively hereinafter as "Defendants."

5 18. Plaintiff avers that the Defendants are liable for the following claims as alleged below:

6 **DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES IN PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

7 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION AGAINST ALL DEFENDANTS- Claims Under The Americans**

8 **With Disabilities Act Of 1990**

9 **Claim I**

10 19. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff on the basis of  
11 disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages,  
12 or accommodations of any place of public accommodation as Defendants own, lease (or lease  
13 to), or operate a place of public accommodation in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182.

14 **Claim II**

15 20. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff directly, or  
16 through contractual, licensing, or other arrangements, to a denial of the opportunity of the  
17 individual or class to participate in or benefit from the goods, services, facilities, privileges,  
18 advantages, or accommodations of an entity in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182.

19 **Claim III**

20 21. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as it is  
21 discriminatory to afford an individual or class of individuals, on the basis of a disability or  
22 disabilities of such individual or class, directly, or through contractual, licensing, or other  
23 arrangements with the opportunity to participate in or benefit from a good, service, facility,  
24 privilege, advantage, or accommodation that is not equal to that afforded to other individuals in  
25 violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182.

26 **Claim IV**

27 22. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as it is  
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1 discriminatory to provide an individual or class of individuals, on the basis of a disability or  
2 disabilities of such individual or class, directly, or through contractual, licensing, or other  
3 arrangements with a good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or accommodation that is  
4 different or separate from that provided to other individuals.

5 **Claim V**

6 23. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as Defendants  
7 failed to afford to an individual with a disability in the most integrated setting appropriate to  
8 the needs of the individual in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182.

9 **Claim VI**

10 24. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as Defendants  
11 utilized standards or criteria or methods of administration that have the effect of discriminating on  
12 the basis of disability; or that perpetuate the discrimination of others who are subject to common  
13 administrative control in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182.

14 **Claim VII**

15 25. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as it is  
16 discriminatory to exclude or otherwise deny equal goods, services, facilities, privileges,  
17 advantages, accommodations, or other opportunities to an individual or entity because of the  
18 known disability of an individual with whom the individual or entity is known to have a  
19 relationship or association in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182. See *Niece v. Fitzner* 922 F. Supp.  
20 1208 (1996)

21 **Claim VIII**

22 26. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as Defendants  
23 engaged in the specific prohibitions as stated in 42 U.S.C. §12182.

24 **Claim IX**

25 27. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as Defendant  
26 failed to demonstrate that the removal of a barrier is not readily achievable, and made such goods,  
27 services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations available through alternative  
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1 methods in a segregated manner in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182. Plaintiff is entitled to  
2 injunctive relief to remove all barriers to access that are related to his disability even those  
3 barriers that are only known to exist but are not directly experienced by plaintiff. *Doran v 7-*  
4 *Eleven Inc*, 2007 U.S.App.Lexis 26143 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir 2007).

5 **Claim X**

6 28. Based on the facts stated above, Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff as Defendants  
7 altered the use of their establishment in a manner that affected or could have affected the usability  
8 of the facility or part thereof and failed to make alterations in such a manner that, to the maximum  
9 extent feasible, the altered portions of the facility are readily accessible to and usable by  
10 individuals with disabilities in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12183.

11 29. WHEREFORE, Plaintiff pray for judgment and relief as hereinafter set forth.

12  
13 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION AGAINST ALL DEFENDANTS - CLAIMS UNDER**  
14 **CALIFORNIA ACCESSIBILITY LAWS**

15 **CLAIM I: Denial Of Full And Equal Access**

16 30. Based on the facts plead above and elsewhere in this complaint, Plaintiff was denied full  
17 and equal access to Defendants' goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or  
18 accommodations within a public accommodation owned, leased, and/or operated by Defendants  
19 as required by Civil Code Sections 54 and 54.1.

20 **CLAIM II: Failure To Modify Practices, Policies And Procedures**

21 31. Based on the facts plead above and elsewhere herein this complaint, Defendants failed and  
22 refused to provide a reasonable alternative by modifying its practices, policies, and procedures in  
23 that they failed to have a scheme, plan, or design to assist Plaintiff and/or others similarly situated  
24 in entering and utilizing Defendants' services as required by Civil Code § 54.1. Thus, Plaintiff  
25 was subjected to discrimination in violation of Civil Code § 54.1.

26 **CLAIM III: Violation Of The Unruh Act**

27 32. Based on the facts plead above and elsewhere herein this complaint and because  
28 Defendants violated the Civil Code § 51 by failing to comply with 42 United States Code §

1 12182(b)(2)(A)(iv) and 42 U.S.C. § 12183(a)(2), Defendants did and continue to knowingly  
2 discriminate against Plaintiff and persons similarly situated in violation of Civil Code §§ 51, 52,  
3 and 54.1. Plaintiff alleges the access violations alleged here are so obvious as to implicate at least  
4 a prima facie case of discriminatory intent.

5 33. Based on the facts plead above, Claims I, II, and III of Plaintiffs' Second Cause Of  
6 Action above, and the facts elsewhere herein this complaint, Plaintiff will suffer irreparable harm  
7 unless Defendants are ordered to remove architectural, non-architectural, and communication  
8 barriers at Defendants' public accommodation. Plaintiff alleges that Defendants' discriminatory  
9 conduct is capable of repetition, and this discriminatory repetition adversely impacts Plaintiff and  
10 a substantial segment of the disability community. Plaintiff alleges there is a state and national  
11 public interest in requiring accessibility in places of public accommodation. Plaintiff has no  
12 adequate remedy at law to redress the discriminatory conduct of Defendants. Plaintiff desires to  
13 return to Defendants' places of business in the immediate future. Accordingly, the Plaintiff  
14 alleges that a structural or mandatory injunction is necessary to enjoin compliance with state civil  
15 rights laws enacted for the benefit of individuals with disabilities.

16 34. Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for damages and relief as hereinafter stated.  
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24 **DEMAND FOR JUDGMENT FOR RELIEF:**

- 25  
26 A. For injunctive relief pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12188(a).  
27 B. For general damages pursuant to Cal. Civil Code §§ 52 or 54.3;  
28 C. For \$4,000 in damages pursuant to Cal. Civil Code § 52 for each and every offense of

1 Civil Code § 51, Title 24 of the California Building Code, ADA, and ADA Accessibility  
2 Guidelines (Codified in 28 C.F.R. Part 36, App. A);

3 D. In the alternative to the damages pursuant to Cal. Civil Code § 52 in Paragraph C above,  
4 for \$1,000 in damages pursuant to Cal. Civil Code § 54.3 for each and every offense of Civil  
5 Code § 54.1, Title 24 of the California Building Code, ADA, and ADA Accessibility Guidelines;

6 E. For treble damages pursuant to Cal. Civil Code §§ 52(a) or 54.3(a);

7  
8 F. For attorneys fees pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988, 42 U.S.C. § 12205, and Cal. Civil Code  
9 § 52; 54.3;

10 G. A Jury Trial and;

11 H. For such other further relief as the court deems proper.

12 Respectfully submitted:

13 Dated: May 19, 2008

**PINNOCK & WAKEFIELD, A.P.C.**

14 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
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16 DAVID C. WAKEFIELD, ESQ.  
17 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
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