The Katten Kattwalk®

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Letter From the Editor

We hope that our readers are staying cool in the summer heat. This month, we had the pleasure of sponsoring and attending the IBA European Fashion and Luxury Law Conference in Paris, and we are now excited to release the Summer 2026 edition of *The Katten Kattwalk*. Inside this issue, you'll find two articles that delve into California's Responsible Textile Recovery Act (Act), the first by Intellectual Property Partner Christopher Cole and me, summarizing the Act's key requirements and identifying which entities bear compliance responsibility, followed by another by Summer Associate Allison Adler, which dives deeper into compliance duties and the practical steps that fashion and luxury brands must have taken before the July 1 deadline.

Then, Outside Counsel Cynthia Martens and I present a California jury's finding in an infringement case between American M2C company Quince and Deckers regarding the "UGG Classic Mini" design patent, and its significance against the backdrop of an increasingly popular "dupe culture." Finally, Commercial Litigation Associate Asena Baran and Litigation Partner and Deputy General Counsel David Halberstadter share their insights on Patagonia's viral lawsuit against environmental drag queen Pattie Gonia, a case that has garnered widespread social media attention and highlights the complexities of trademark law.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and, as usual, please don't hesitate to reach out with your fashion law questions.

Karen Artz Ash

In This Issue

California Responsible Textile Recovery Act

What Fashion Brands Need to Know as of July 1, 2026

By Christopher Cole and Karen Artz Ash

California has enacted the nation's first extended producer responsibility (EPR) law specifically targeting textiles. SB 707, the Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2024 (the Act), imposes direct compliance obligations on brands, manufacturers, importers and retailers selling covered textile products in the state. **As of July 1, 2026, all producers must have joined the approved Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO)**. This article summarizes the Act's key requirements, identifies which entities bear compliance responsibility, and outlines the practical steps that fashion and luxury brands must take before the deadline.

1. What Is the California Responsible Textile Recovery Act?

SB 707, the Act (Cal. Pub. Res. Code §§ 42984–42984.27), was signed by Governor Newsom on September 28, 2024, making California the first US state to enact an EPR law specifically for textiles. The Act requires producers to fund and participate in collection, sorting, repair, reuse and recycling infrastructure for post-consumer textiles, administered and enforced by CalRecycle (the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery).

The law imposes direct compliance obligations on brands, manufacturers, importers and retailers selling covered textile products in California. Noncompliance can result in civil penalties of up to $10,000 per day ($50,000 per day for intentional or knowing violations) and, perhaps more significantly, once CalRecycle publishes its compliance list, then retailers, distributors and online marketplaces will be prohibited from selling products from noncompliant producers in California. Notably, producers with less than $1 million in annual aggregate global turnover (including affiliates) are exempt.

2. What Products Are Covered?

The Act covers "apparel" and "textile articles," each defined by a specific statutory list. Apparel includes clothing, footwear, handbags, backpacks and knitted/woven accessories. Textile articles include blankets, curtains, towels, bedding, tablecloths, napkins, linens and pillows, but only where the item is made entirely or primarily from a natural, artificial or synthetic fiber, yarn or fabric. Products that are predominantly non-textile (e.g., foam, rubber or plastic) may fall outside the definition even if they appear on the enumerated list.

Key exclusions include: products covered under other California stewardship programs (mattresses, e-waste and carpets); military and health/environmental personal protective equipment (PPE); secondhand-only sellers; and producers with less than $1 million in annual aggregate global turnover (including affiliates).

3. Who Has Compliance Responsibility?

The Act assigns compliance responsibility using a hierarchical waterfall, in which only one entity is the "producer" for a given covered product. Critically, the hierarchy turns on whether there is a qualifying person "**in the state**" (i.e., in California), not merely in the United States.

Priority	Responsible Party	Description
1st	Manufacturer/Brand Owner or Licensee	A person who **manufactures** a covered product ***and* owns or is the licensee of the brand or trademark** under which the product is sold in California. This tier requires both elements, manufacturing and brand ownership/licensure.
2nd	Brand/Trademark Owner or Exclusive Licensee	If no Tier 1 person exists in the state, responsibility falls to the **owner of the brand or trademark**. If the owner is not in California, responsibility shifts to the **exclusive licensee of the brand or trademark** in California. An exclusive licensee is a person holding the exclusive right to use the trademark or brand in the state in connection with the manufacture, sale or distribution of the covered product.
3rd	Importer of Record	If no Tier 1 or Tier 2 person exists in California, responsibility falls to the **person that imports** the covered product into the **state** for sale or distribution.
4th	Distributor, Retailer, or Wholesaler	If no Tier 1, 2 or 3 person exists in California, the **distributor, retailer or wholesaler** who sells the product in or into the state is the responsible producer.

4. How Does the Producer Hierarchy Apply to Luxury Fashion Companies?

For luxury and international fashion brands, the critical question is which entity qualifies as a "producer" under the waterfall. The hierarchy turns on **California presence**; a brand headquartered outside California remains the primary responsible party if it has a California presence (subsidiary, office or direct-to-consumer e-commerce fulfillment). A sale is deemed to occur in California if the product is delivered to a California consumer. Only if no qualifying Tier 1 person is present in California does responsibility shift to the brand/trademark owner (Tier 2), then the exclusive licensee, then the importer, and finally the distributor/retailer/wholesaler.

Licensee structures. If a brand licenses its trademark exclusively to a California entity, that exclusive licensee may be the responsible producer under Tier 2, but only if no Tier 1 manufacturer/brand owner is present in California. The statute defines "exclusive licensee" as a person holding the exclusive right to use the brand in California in connection with the manufacture, sale or distribution of the covered product. Where there are multiple non-exclusive licensees, the exclusive licensee tier may not apply, and the importer may be the relevant party. Importantly, the statute permits any supply chain participant to **contractually** assume the producer's duties and liabilities, simplifying compliance in complex licensing arrangements.

Factors to evaluate include: Does the brand owner (or a manufacturing entity that also owns the brand) have a California presence? Is there an exclusive California licensee? Who is the importer of record? Critically, the statute expressly permits any person in the supply chain to **contractually assume** some or all of the statutory producer's duties and liabilities, relieving the statutory producer of those obligations. For clients who are both licensors and licensees, this means compliance responsibility can and should be addressed directly in license agreements. Brands should not wait to see where they fall in the statutory hierarchy; they should proactively negotiate and document which entity will bear compliance obligations, including PRO registration, fee payment and data reporting.

5. What Must Responsible Entities Have Done by July 1, 2026?

The immediate deadline was July 1, 2026. CalRecycle has already approved the PRO, and producers should have completed their PRO registration by July 1.

Consequences of noncompliance. Once CalRecycle publishes its compliance list (expected after regulations take effect, no earlier than July 2028), retailers, distributors and online marketplaces will be **prohibited from selling products from noncompliant producers**, effectively barring noncompliant brands from the California market. Formal civil penalty exposure ($10,000 per day; $50,000 per day for knowing violations) begins upon plan approval or July 1, 2030, whichever is sooner.

6. What Is the PRO and What Role Does It Play?

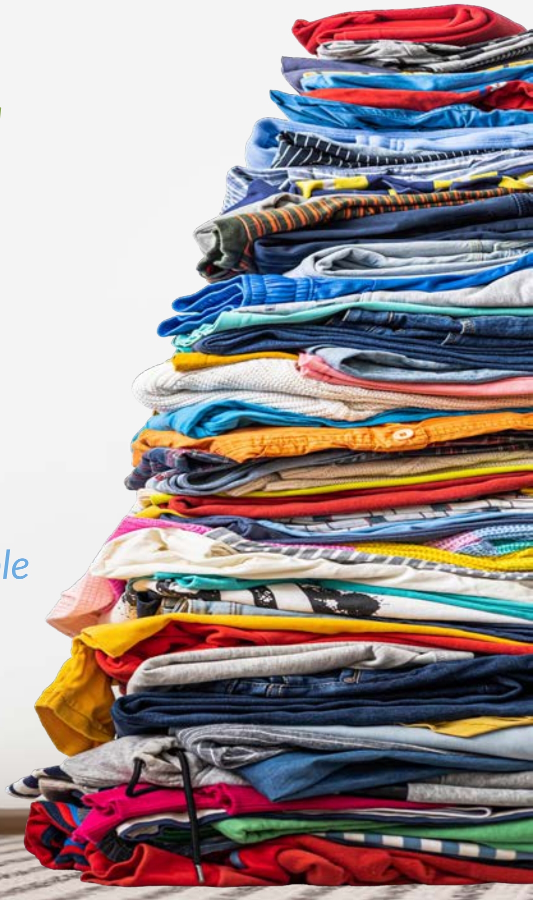
The PRO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit formed by producers to collectively manage compliance. Its responsibilities include establishing collection sites, managing sorting/repair/recycling operations, setting eco-modulated fees and reporting to CalRecycle. The Act also requires online marketplaces to annually report to CalRecycle all third-party sellers with over $1 million in covered product sales.

7. Key Takeaways and Immediate Action Items

If your company sells apparel, footwear, accessories or textile products in California, as of July 1 of this year, you are required to have joined the approved PRO. Before that deadline, you should understand which entity in your corporate or licensing structure is the statutory "producer." Equally important, the statute allows parties to contractually allocate compliance responsibility, so even if the statutory hierarchy assigns the obligation to one entity, that obligation can be shifted by agreement. For companies that are both licensors and licensees across multiple brands, building EPR compliance terms into your license agreements now will avoid ambiguity and disputes as enforcement ramps up.

Katten can assist with determining your responsible entity under the producer hierarchy, preparing and including contractual language in licenses and other written agreements to properly assign compliance responsibility and ensure compliance going forward, facilitating your PRO registration and advising on ongoing compliance strategy as the regulatory framework develops.

Waste Not: California Puts the Fashion Industry on the Clock



A first-in-the-nation textile law asks brands a deceptively simple question: who, exactly, is responsible for what we throw away?

By Karen Artz Ash

Fashion has always been fluent in the language of the new: new seasons, new silhouettes and new drops. What the industry has been slower to talk about is what happens to the old: the mountain of discarded clothing, footwear and household textiles that ends up in landfills each year. California has now decided to make that conversation mandatory. With SB 707, the Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2024 (Act), the state has enacted the nation's first extended producer responsibility (EPR) law written specifically for textiles.[1] Signed by Governor Newsom on September 28, 2024, the Act makes California the first US state to hold the makers and sellers of clothing accountable for the full life cycle of what they put into the market.

For fashion and luxury brands, this is not a far-off policy question. The first compliance deadline of July 1, 2026, has already passed, requiring producers to join the approved Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO).

From Runway to Recovery

The premise of EPR is straightforward, even if its mechanics are not: the companies that profit from putting products into the market should help pay for collecting, sorting and recycling them once consumers are done. SB 707 applies that logic to textiles for the first time, requiring producers to fund and participate in the collection, sorting, repair, reuse and recycling infrastructure for post-consumer textiles.[2] The program is administered and enforced by CalRecycle, the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery.[3]

At the center of the plan sits the Producer Responsibility Organization, or PRO, which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit formed by producers to manage compliance collectively.[4] The PRO serves as the vehicle that will establish collection sites, oversee sorting, repair and recycling operations, set eco-modulated fees and report back to CalRecycle.[5] The Act required all producers of covered textile products to join the approved PRO by July 1 of this year.[6]

What's in the Closet?

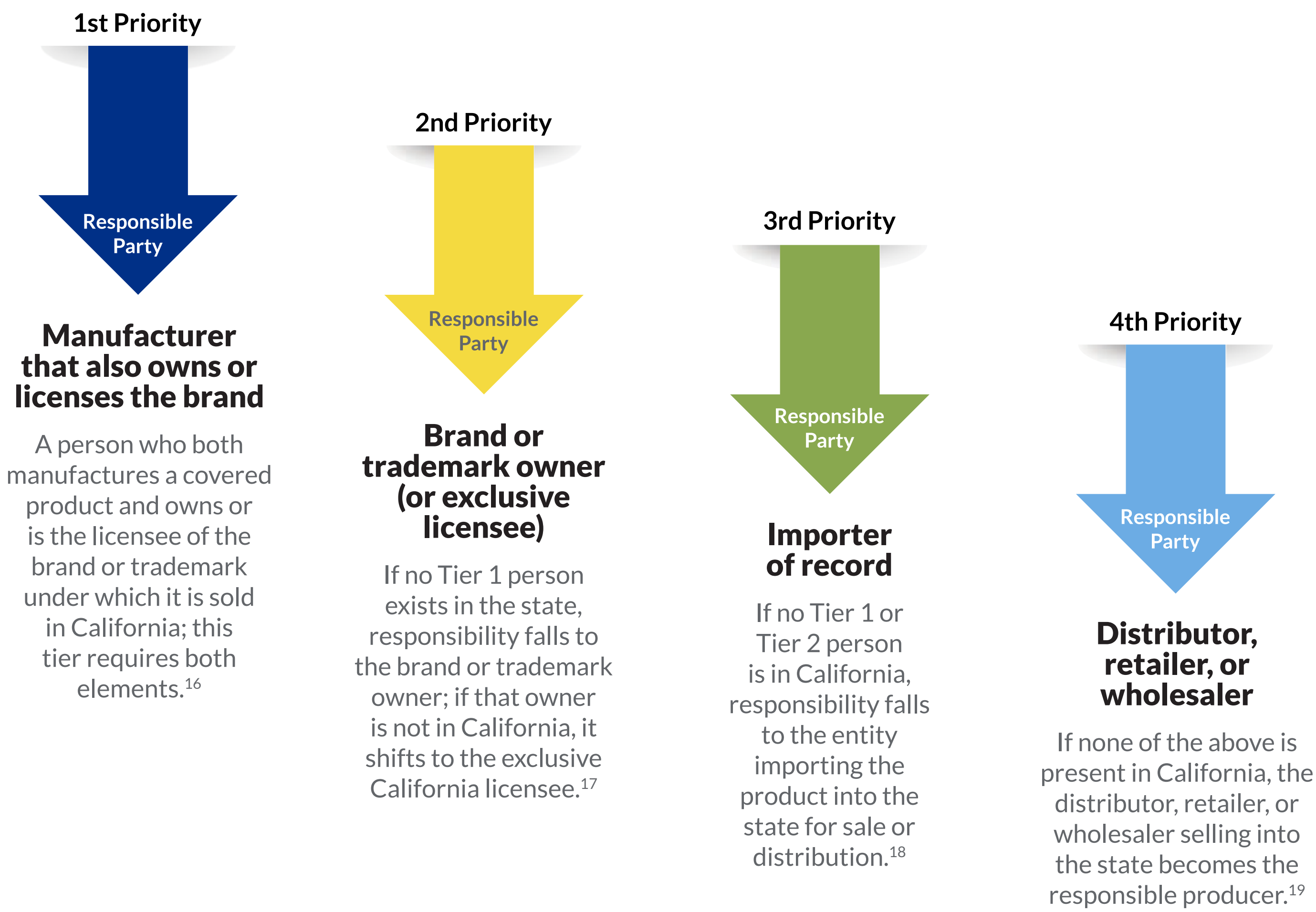
The Act reaches further into the wardrobe than one might expect. It covers both "apparel" and "textile articles," each defined by a specific statutory list.[7] Apparel includes clothing, footwear, handbags, backpacks, and knitted or woven accessories,[8] much of the core inventory of any fashion house. "Textile articles" are also included, such as blankets, curtains, towels, bedding, tablecloths, napkins, linens and pillows, so long as the item is made entirely or primarily from a natural, artificial or synthetic fiber, yarn or fabric.[9]

There are, however, meaningful edges to the law. Products that are predominantly non-textile, such as foam, rubber or plastic, may fall outside the definition even if they resemble something on the list.[10] The Act also carves out products already covered by other California stewardship programs, such as mattresses, e-waste and carpets;[11] military and health or environmental PPE;[12] and secondhand-only sellers.[13] Further, in a nod to the smallest players, producers with less than $1,000,000 in annual aggregate global turnover, including affiliates, are exempt entirely.[14]

The Waterfall: Who Is the 'Producer?'

For global brands, this is the part of the Act that demands the closest reading. SB 707 does not spread responsibility evenly across the supply chain. Instead, it assigns it through a hierarchical "waterfall," in which only one entity is the "producer" for any given covered product.[15] Crucially, the hierarchy turns on whether there is a qualifying person "in the state;" that is, in California itself, not just somewhere in the United States.

The tiers cascade in order of priority, as shown below:



For international and luxury houses, the practical takeaway is that geography does not confer immunity. A brand headquartered outside California may nevertheless qualify as the responsible producer if it, or another qualifying entity within the applicable tier of the statutory waterfall, is "in the state." Whether a subsidiary, office or other California presence satisfies that requirement depends on the particular corporate structure and statutory definition. Plus, a sale is deemed to occur in California whenever the product is delivered to a California consumer.[20] Only if no qualifying Tier 1 person is present in the state does the obligation cascade down to the brand owner, then to the exclusive licensee, then to the importer, and finally to the distributor or retailer.

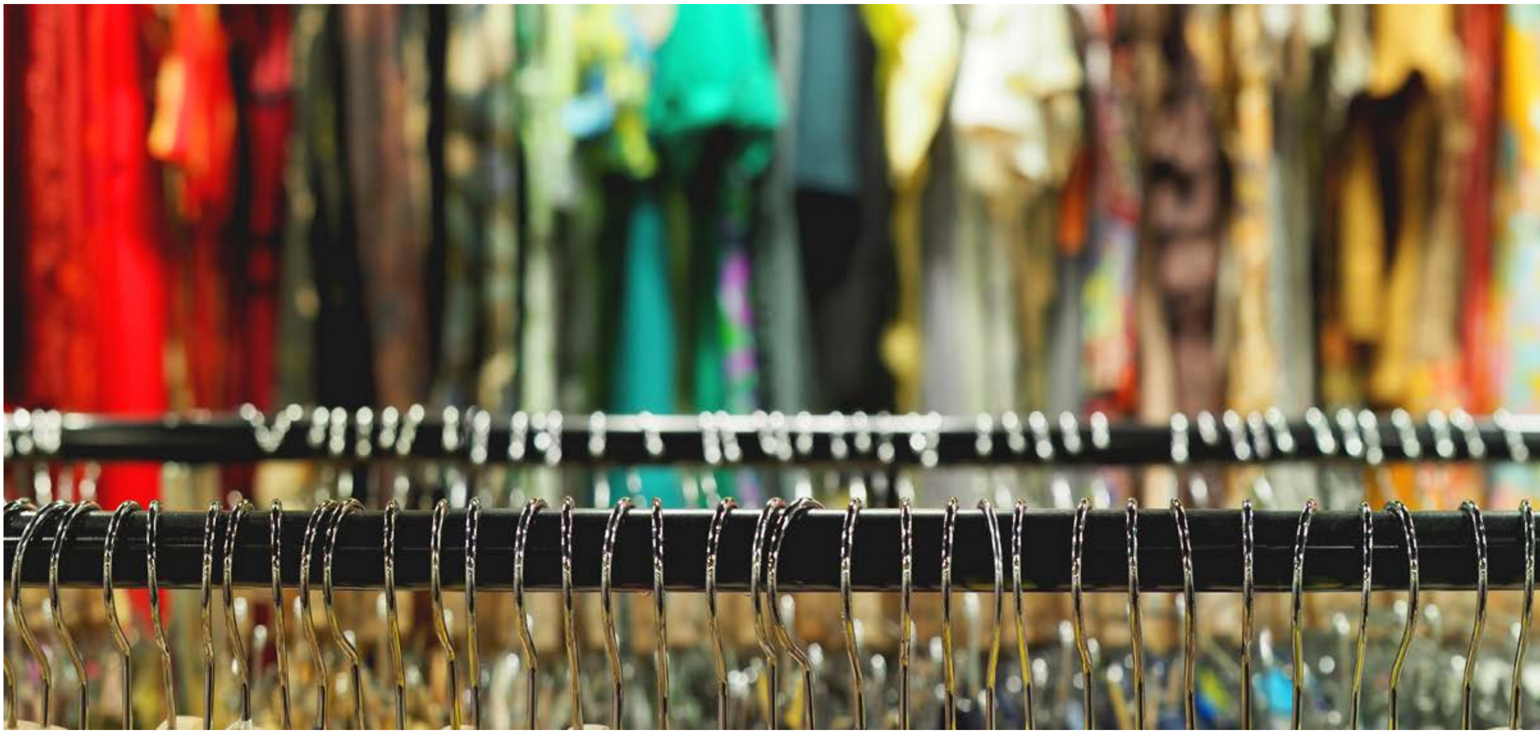
The Answer May Be in Your License Agreements

Because the waterfall depends on who sits where, a brand's licensing structure frequently decides the outcome. If a brand licenses its trademark exclusively to a California entity, that exclusive licensee may become the responsible producer under Tier 2, provided no Tier 1 manufacturer or brand owner sits in California.[21] Where a brand has spread its trademark across multiple non-exclusive licensees, the exclusive-licensee tier may not apply at all, and the importer may end up holding the obligation instead.

The most consequential feature of the Act, however, may be its flexibility. The statute expressly permits any person in the supply chain to contractually assume some or all of the statutory producer's duties and liabilities, relieving the statutory producer of those obligations. The parties may contractually allocate some or all of the statutory producer's duties and liabilities, as the Act expressly permits. For clients who are simultaneously licensors and licensees across a portfolio of brands, this means compliance responsibility can, and should, be addressed directly in license agreements. The smart move is to negotiate and document up front which entity will bear registration, fee payment and data-reporting duties, rather than wait and discover where one lands in the statutory order.

The Price of Doing Nothing

The Act gives CalRecycle authority to impose substantial civil penalties for noncompliance. Violations are subject to penalties of up to $10,000 per day, which increase to up to $50,000 per day for knowing or intentional violations. Those penalties



become available upon approval of the producer responsibility organization's plan or July 1, 2030, whichever is earlier.

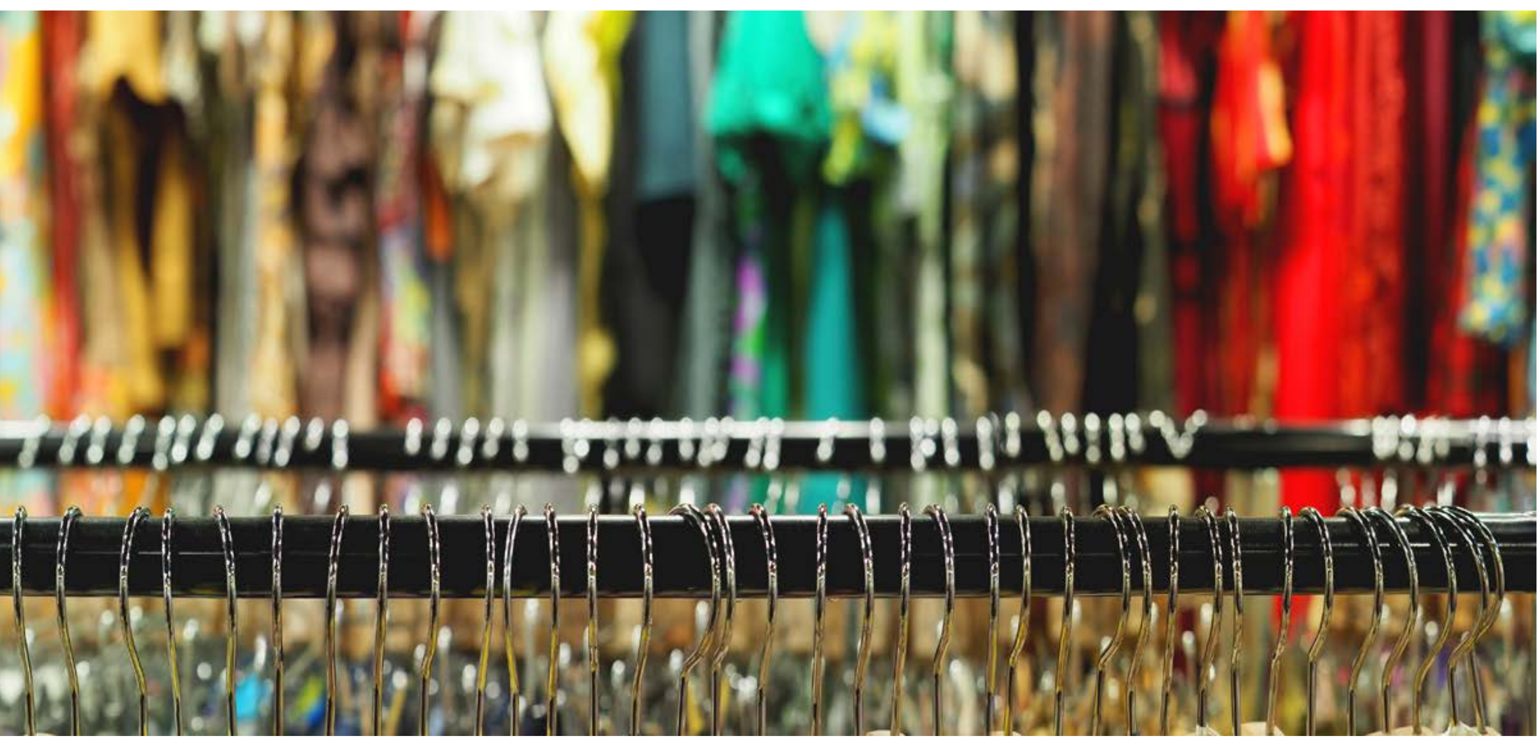
The sharper edge, though, is market access. Once CalRecycle publishes its compliance list, expected no earlier than July 2028 after regulations take effect,[22] retailers, distributors and online marketplaces will be prohibited from selling products from noncompliant producers.[23] The effect is to bar noncompliant brands from the California market altogether. For good measure, the Act also requires online marketplaces to report every third-party seller with more than $1,000,000 in covered product sales annually to CalRecycle.[24] In a state that, on its own, is one of the largest consumer economies in the world, losing the ability to sell there is not a consequence any brand can afford.

The Afterlife of a Garment

California has, in effect, posed a question to the fashion industry that it has long left unspoken: who owns the afterlife of a garment? With SB 707, the state has written its own answer into law, and the rest of the country is watching. Textiles are the first of what will likely be many industries asked to account for what happens after the sale, and California has a habit of setting the standard others eventually follow. The runway, it turns out, does not end at the register.

1 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984 (West 2025).
2 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.4(a)(1) (West 2025).
3 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(j) (West 2025).
4 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(t) (West 2025).
5 Cal. Pub. Res. Code §§ 42984.7, 42984.14, 42984.17 (West 2025).
6 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.4(a)(1) – (3) (West 2025).
7 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(i)(1) (West 2025).
8 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(a)(1) (West 2025).
9 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(ae) (1) (West 2025).
10 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(a)(1), (ae) (1) (West 2025).
11 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(i)(2)(A) – (C) (West 2025).
12 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(a)(2)(A) – (B) (West 2025).
13 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(7) (West 2025).
14 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(8) (West 2025).
15 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(1) – (4) (West 2025).
16 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(1) (West 2025).
17 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(2) (West 2025).
18 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(3) (West 2025).
19 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(4) (West 2025).
20 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(5) (West 2025).
21 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.3(s)(2) (West 2025).
22 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.2 (West 2025).
23 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.20(c)(2) (West 2025).
24 Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 42984.27(a)(1) (West 2025).

* *Allison Adler, a 2026 Katten summer associate, contributed to this article.*



Jury Gives UGG Design Patent the Boot

By Karen Artz Ash and Cynthia Martens

In June, a California jury found that a boot design by American M2C company Quince (Quince) infringed the design patent owned by Deckers Outdoor Corporation (Deckers), but also found that the "UGG Classic Mini" design patent was invalid.

The jury decision in *Deckers Outdoor Corp. v. Last Brand Inc.* came on the heels of a related judicial holding that Deckers' "Classic Ultra Mini" UGG boot trade dress was generic.

Taken together, these legal findings illustrate the obstacles fashion companies face in protecting their brands, particularly as "dupe culture," which promotes cheaper imitations of branded products as a valid alternative to the originals, has reached a massive audience across social media platforms. These challenges are especially acute when dupes mimic the overall appearance of a well-known, sought-after product without including logos or other insignia, in a bid to avoid claims of counterfeiting.

The US Supreme Court has held that trade dress, which commonly refers to all of the combined visual cues that a product and its packaging give to consumers, altogether identifying the source of the product, functions as a trademark under the Lanham Act. If multiple third parties imitate a brand's trade dress, they dilute its power as a source indicator, rendering it vulnerable to claims of genericness.

In its complaint, Deckers characterized UGG, founded in 1979, as "one of the most well-recognized premium comfort-leisure shoe brands in the United States." The "Classic Ultra Mini Trade Dress" was described as "non-functional in its entirety, visually distinctive, and unique in the footwear industry," consisting of "a. An ankle-high boot; b. Classic suede boot styling; c. An exaggerated, raised and exposed circular stitch pattern; d. Exposed tufting; e. A raised and rounded vamp; f. A suede heel overlay on the boots exterior; g. Fabric binding along the top of the boot and along the sole; h. A thick, flat sole; and i. A top line that is higher in the front and lower in the back."

The UGG Classic Mini design patent, D927,161, covered "the ornamental design of a footwear upper," as depicted in accompanying illustrations.

Deckers is no stranger to UGG trademark disputes. In Australia and New Zealand, the term "ugg" as it relates to footwear is generic, referring to a unisex style of sheepskin boot with fleece on the inside. Worn by World War I pilots and popular with surfers in the "Swinging Sixties," ugg boots gradually rode a wave of popularity that culminated in the creation of Dockers' California-based UGG brand. Deckers has repeatedly sparred with Australian and New Zealand boot manufacturers that use "ugg" descriptively and view it as part of local heritage.

For fashion brands, the ultimate outcome in the UGG case illustrates that even an aggressive enforcement strategy does not guarantee legal success.

** Cynthia Martens is a former Katten Intellectual Property associate who now serves as outside counsel to the firm.*

Environmentalist Giant v. Environmentalist Queen

VTT Studio/Shutterstock.com

By Asena Baran and David Halberstadter

Thanks to Patagonia's viral lawsuit against environmental drag queen Pattie Gonia,[1] millions of people are finally interested in the complexities of trademark law. We wanted to take this opportunity to answer some burning questions in the social media comments: (1) "Why not Jan Sport, Trixie Mattel, or Brita Filter?"; (2) "Is this 'a corporation trying to erase an activist'?"; and (3) "Could Pattie be liable for more than the $1 in nominal damages that Patagonia seeks?"

Many drag queens use double entendres as their stage name for comedic effect, and it is not unusual for a queen to borrow a trademarked term to convey some element of their onstage personality.[2] Pattie Gonia fits right into the world of drag superstars such as Jan Sport, Trixie Mattel, and Brita Filter. What sets Pattie apart from them, however, is that, unlike her peers, Pattie is attempting to capitalize on her punny name in the same way the eponymous company has capitalized on its name. As alleged in Patagonia's complaint, Pattie has applied to register the mark "Pattie Gonia" to sell clothing and accessories similar to Patagonia merchandise, including a logo that looks an awful lot like Patagonia's logo, and with a mission to fund climate change activism, exactly like the mission fueling Patagonia's "enormous goodwill."[3]

This commercialization of her name exposes Pattie Gonia to liability under the Lanham Act that Jan Sport, Trixie Mattel, and Brita Filter have managed to avoid, likely by *not* trying to sell backpacks, dolls, or water filters that capitalize on their respective namesake's reputation. After all, the "Lanham Act, expressly enacted to be applied in commercial contexts, does not prohibit all unauthorized uses of a trademark,"[4] and "only unauthorized uses of a trademark in connection with a commercial transaction in which the trademark is being used to confuse potential consumers" violate the Act.[5]

And while this lawsuit may seem, to some people, like the epitome of "a corporation trying to erase an activist," as Pattie puts it,[6] Patagonia's "failure to enforce [its trademark] rights may result in the weakening of these rights over time."[7] The risk to Patagonia is especially great if, as Patagonia alleges, Patagonia and Pattie Gonia are "in competitive proximity," and members of "the public [already] mistakenly assume there is an association between [Patagonia and Pattie Gonia's] related goods even though no such association exists."[8]

That said, in the trademark context, a lawsuit seeking $1 in nominal damages could in fact litigate an activist into oblivion because "when a trademark is infringed, trademark owners have more at stake than just the damages or loss of profits in that case."[9] If, as alleged here, there is "ample evidence of actual confusion" and Pattie Gonia "reneged on its agreement to stop using [Patagonia's] mark" long before the latter brought this lawsuit, Pattie Gonia may be liable for the attorneys' fees and costs that Patagonia incurred in enforcing its trademark, which could be tens of thousands of dollars.[10]

The battle between the environmentalist giant and the environmentalist queen may be resolved off the public record, as the US District Court for the Central District of California ordered the parties to private mediation.[11] Since the court may never address the questions posed by millions of social media spectators interested in the matter, we hope that this overview provides useful context for evaluating the claims and defenses beyond the headlines.

From Instagram @pattiegonia, posted on February 19, 2025.

badnews86dups/Shutterstock.com

1 *Patagonia, Inc. v. Entrepreneur Enters., Inc. et al.*, Case No. 2:26-cv-00586-RGK-RAO (C.D. Cal.).

2 Sam Corbin, *How Wordplay Helps Drag Climb to Peak Camp*, The New York Times (June 24, 2026), https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/24/crosswords/drag-performance-wordplay-camp.html.

3 *Supra* note 1, ECF No. 1, ¶ 21.

4 *Bosley Med. Inst., Inc. v. Kremer*, 403 F. 3d 672, 679 (9th Cir. 2005).

5 *Id.* at 676.

6 @pattiegonia, TikTok (May 27, 2026).

7 *Partners for Health & Home, L.P. v. Seung Wee Yang*, 488 B.R. 431, 438 (C.D. Cal. 2012), aff'd, 671 F. App'x 475 (9th Cir. 2016).

8 *Rebelution, LLC v. Perez*, 732 F. Supp. 2d 883, 893 (C.D. Cal. 2010); *see also supra* note 1, ECF No. 1, pg. 5.

9 *Partners*, 488 B.R. at 438.

10 *Earthquake Sound Corp. v. Bumper Indus.*, 352 F. 3d 1210, 1218 (9th Cir. 2003); *supra* note 1, ECF No. 1, ¶ 25–26.

11 *Supra* note 1, ECF No. 29.

Events

IBA European Fashion and Luxury Law Conference

Katten sponsored the [IBA European Fashion and Luxury Law Conference] on July 8–9 in Paris. The event brought together preeminent legal professionals to discuss today's evolving, "digital-first" intellectual property (IP) landscape, as well as the regulatory pressures and other factors, such as artificial intelligence (AI), mergers and acquisitions (M&A) and maison governance, impacting luxury brands.

On the second day of the conference, host committee member and Corporate Partner **Ilana Lubin** led roundtable discussions on hot topics in the fashion and luxury industry. London IP Partner **Nathan Smith** and Associate **Anita Hodea**, along with Chicago Corporate Associate **Julia Brook**, were also in attendance.

- **Fashion, Beauty, and Retail at Leading Law Firms — A Conversation with Transactional Attorneys**

  On March 30, IP Partner and Trademark/Copyright/Privacy National Co-Chair **Karen Artz Ash** presented alongside transactional attorneys from other law firms during the panel, "Fashion, Beauty, and Retail at Leading Law Firms," hosted by the Fashion Law Society at the New York University (NYU) School of Law. The panelists shared what led them to a career in law, how their practices intersect with the fashion, beauty and retail industries, the legal trends and emerging issues shaping today's fashion industry, and how traditional practice groups, such as corporate and intellectual property, address the needs of fashion companies.

Recognitions

- **Katten Named Among US Law Firms for Retail Companies by *The Fashion Law***

  Katten has been recognized by *The Fashion Law* (*TFL*) as one of the 2026 Top US Law Firms for Retail Companies. Honorees on the second annual list were selected following *TFL*'s evaluation of the scale and scope of each firm's work, the services they provide, the strength of their client rosters and their involvement in the fashion law community.

  TFL spotlighted Katten's multidisciplinary Fashion, Retail, Luxury and Beauty practice, led by Intellectual Property (IP) Partner and Trademark/Copyright/Privacy National Co-Chair **Karen Artz Ash**, which handles a wide range of matters related to mergers and acquisitions (M&A), corporate transactions, disputes regarding environmental, social and governance (ESG) and sustainability compliance, IP, litigation, and trademark licensing and strategy, as well as helping brands enforce their rights across physical and digital platforms. *TFL* also underscored Katten's notable client roster of globally recognized companies, including major fashion houses and retail brands, and standout individual attorneys in sector.

- **Katten Named Trademark Disputes Firm of the Year**

  Katten was named Trademark Disputes Firm of the Year (Midwest) as part of *Managing Intellectual Property*'s 2026 Americas Awards. The Americas Awards winners were revealed and celebrated during an April 9 ceremony in New York.

  "This acknowledgment underscores Katten's established strength in trademark litigation and affirms our role as a trusted firm for complex infringement matters," said IP Partner and Trademark/Copyright/Privacy Group Co-Chair **Floyd Mandell**. "We are grateful to *Managing IP* for recognizing Katten and for highlighting the outstanding intellectual property work taking place across the industry."

- **Katten Climbs in *Chambers USA* 2026 Rankings**

  In the 2026 edition of the *Chambers USA* guide, the firm was recognized as a leader in 42 practice areas and 108 attorneys who were individually ranked. Individually ranked attorneys include IP Partner and Advertising and Brand Litigation Co-Chair **Christopher Cole** (Advertising: Litigation & Advertising: NAD Proceedings); IP Partner and Advertising and Brand Litigation Co-Chair **Kristin Achterhof**, **Karen Artz Ash**, **Floyd Mandell**, IP Associate **Julia Mazur** (also recognized among Associates to Watch) and IP Counsel **Carolyn Passen** (Intellectual Property: Trademark, Copyright & Trade Secrets); and Litigation Partner and Deputy General Counsel **David Halberstadter** (Media & Entertainment: Litigation). Additionally, one of Katten's highest rankings was in the category of Intellectual Property: Trademark, Copyright & Trade Secrets.

- **Katten Earns Top Rankings in *Chambers Global* 2026**

  The 2026 edition of the *Chambers Global Guide* ranked 14 Katten partners and eight of our practices, including in the area of Intellectual Property: Trademark, Copyright & Trade Secrets, under which **Floyd Mandell** is an individually recognized attorney. This honor adds to a long list of accolades earned by Floyd throughout his career, including IP Stars by *Managing Intellectual Property*, *Best Lawyers in America*, Super Lawyers and The Legal 500 United States.

- **Katten Earns Top Rankings in the Legal 500 US 2026 Guide**

  The Legal 500 United States 2026 guide recognized 23 of Katten's practice areas, in addition to seven attorneys who earned individual distinctions and 79 attorneys who were highlighted as recommended individuals in the guide's editorial commentary, including **Kristin Achterhof** and **Christopher Cole**, who were also named to the Legal 500's prestigious Leading Partners list, **Karen Artz Ash**, **David Halberstadter**, **Floyd Mandell** and **Carolyn Passen**.

  Read more here.

Recognitions *(continued)*

- **Floyd A. Mandell and Karen Artz Ash Named Among 2026 *WTR Global Leaders***

  Karen Artz Ash and **Floyd Mandell** have once again been recognized among *World Trademark Review's* (*WTR*) *Global Leaders* 2026, marking another consecutive year on the prestigious list. This distinction highlights the world's preeminent law firm and corporate attorneys in trademark law, drawing on *WTR*'s market-leading research initiatives, including the *WTR 1000* and the *WTR 300*, to honor the "best of the best" in trademark practice.

- ***IP STARS* Names Nathan Smith to 2026 Edition**

  London IP Partner **Nathan Smith** has been named a Notable Practitioner in the 2026 edition of IP STARS, the leading specialist guide for companies and individuals seeking experienced legal practitioners for contentious and non-contentious intellectual property matters. He is recognized in the Western Europe region for his work in the United Kingdom, with a focus on intellectual property, trademark litigation and copyright and related rights.

  Published by *Managing IP*, IP STARS has served as a trusted resource for identifying leading IP legal talent worldwide since 1990. The guide ranks law firms and practitioners across IP practice areas globally, and selection is based on independent research, including interviews and surveys with thousands of firms, practitioners and clients.

- **Katten Attorneys Honored Among *Thomson Reuters* Stand-out Lawyers**

  The 2026 *Thomson Reuters* Stand-out Lawyers list includes 13 Katten attorneys, recognized for their ability to improve client satisfaction, increase client advocacy, strengthen their firm's brand and enhance people engagement. Honorees include Corporate Partner **Ilana Lubin**, **Floyd Mandell** and Intellectual Property Department Chair **Deepro Mukerjee**.

- **David Halberstadter Named to *The Daily Journal*'s Top IP Lawyers 2026 List**

  On May 20, **David Halberstadter** was named to *The Daily Journal*'s 2026 list of Top IP Lawyers. The annual list honors California's leading lawyers in the patent litigation, trademark and copyright fields. David has received this accolade consecutively each year since 2018 and is being recognized for the approximately 40 years he has devoted to intellectual property litigation, concentrated in copyright and trademark matters.

  The Daily Journal noted standouts from David's career, including for his client STX Films, which faced a lawsuit in connection with the marketing of a film featuring puppetry designed by Brian Henson. The show's tagline ("No Sesame. All Street.") prompted an application for a temporary restraining order from Sesame Workshop that alleged federal trademark infringement and unfair competition, among other things. "Our defense team had barely four days, working over Memorial Day weekend, to prepare our opposition; but we got it done," David explained. "The court denied the TRO, and within a matter of days, Sesame Workshop dismissed the action." More recently, David also represented defendants against a plaintiff who claimed the Starz series "P-Valley" infringed upon her musical play, achieving a successful outcome for his client.

  Read more here.

- **Nathan Smith Named Among *World IP Review* Leaders 2026**

  Nathan Smith has been recognized among *World IP Review*'s (*WIPR*) Leaders 2026, a list that recognizes IP counsel in more than 80 countries and six continents who are at the forefront of shaping the future of IP law. The list serves as a trusted resource for leading in-house and referral lawyers to identify reliable lawyers who can advise on their most significant IP matters, according to the *WIPR* announcement. Leaders are named based on peer-to-peer recognition, alongside the *WIPR* Rankings team's assessments of each nominee's credentials.

More NEWS to KNOW

- **Katten Transatlantic Restructuring Team Advises on Radley Group Sale to Gordon Brothers**

  A transatlantic Katten Restructuring team, led by Partner and Head of European Restructuring **James Davison**, Counsel **Victoria Procter** and Associate **Lydia Demnitz-King** from our London office, advised the Radley Group (Radley) and FTI Consulting (as administrators) on the sale of Radley's global brand and related intellectual property assets to an affiliate of Gordon Brothers, a global investment firm. Radley, an iconic British label for luxury handbags and accessories, has expanded internationally and gained recognition for its iconic designs and quality craftsmanship.

  "Radley is a well-loved British heritage brand, which we hope to see thrive under Gordon Brothers' ownership, as many other global brands have done," said James. "It has been a pleasure working with the exceptional teams at Radley, FTI Consulting and Gordon Brothers in order to deliver an outcome which preserves the Radley brand for future generations."

  Read more here.

- **Floyd Mandell Quoted by *Law360* on Blockbuster's Trademark Battle With Animal Feed Company**

  Floyd Mandell was quoted by *Law360* in an article about the ongoing trademark dispute between Blockbuster LLC and Mississippi-based animal feed company, Southern Seed and Feed. *Law360* reports that Blockbuster filed a notice of opposition on January 15 to block Southern Seed's application to register "Block Buster" for deer feed and nutritional supplements, alleging that the company is trying to exploit Blockbuster's iconic legacy. Central to the case is whether Blockbuster, once a dominant household name, can still claim "famous mark" status under trademark law or whether its fame has faded alongside its commercial presence.

  "In my view, this is like steam shovels and lipsticks, and the mark is not that strong in today's age," Floyd commented. "I just don't think that people that buy the deer feed are thinking they must be connected to the video company," adding that he did not think this would be a "slam-dunk win" for Blockbuster.

  Read more here.

- **Terry Green and Larry Wong Quoted by *Lexology Pro* on UK Government's Latest Efforts Toward Online Safety**

  London Deputy Managing Partner **Terry Green** was quoted in two *Lexology Pro* articles about the UK government's latest efforts to enhance online safety. Terry provided insights on the government's pledge to extend the scope of the Online Safety Act (OSA) to close an enforcement gap related to artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots. Currently, the OSA only covers content created by AI chatbots in specific circumstances, allowing standalone AI tools, such as X's Grok, to escape regulatory oversight. The government's amendments aim to ensure AI chatbot services that might otherwise sit outside the OSA are still required to protect users against illegal content.

  As the fallout over X's Grok continues, another *Lexology Pro* piece discussed the government's plans to force platforms to remove nonconsensual intimate and abusive images within 48 hours of a report. Terry and Intellectual Property Associate **Larry Wong** noted that this timeframe may prove challenging for smaller platforms without enough resources to process removals that quickly.

  Read the articles.

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For more information, contact: Karen Artz Ash
Partner and National Co-Chair, Trademark/Copyright/Privacy Group | Intellectual Property | Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP
+1.212.940.8554 | karen.ash@katten.com | 50 Rockefeller Plaza | New York, New York 10020-1605

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