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12 Class Counsel

13 [Additional Counsel Appear on Signature Page]

14 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**

15 **FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

16 BRIAN WARNER, KENNETH
MACLEOD; MICHAEL MEADE,
17 MICHAEL WATSON, JAMES
FULLER, and DALE FRANQUET,
18 individually and on behalf of all
others similarly situated,

19 Plaintiffs,

20 v.

21 TOYOTA MOTOR SALES, U.S.A.,
22 INC., a California corporation,

23 Defendant.

Case No. 2:15-cv-02171-FMO-(FFMx)

CLASS ACTION

**PLAINTIFFS' NOTICE OF
MOTION AND MOTION FOR
ATTORNEYS' FEES, EXPENSES,
AND SERVICE AWARDS**

Date: April 27, 2017

Time: 10:00 a.m.

USDJ: Fernando M. Olguin
Ctrm: 6D, 6th Floor – 1st Street

USMJ: Frederick F. Mumm
Ctrm: E, 9th Floor – Spring

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Complaint Filed: March 24, 2015

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BLOOD HURST & O'REARDON, LLP

1 PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on April 27, 2017, at 10:00 a.m., in
2 Courtroom 6D of the United States District Court for the Central District of
3 California, located at 350 West 1st Street, Los Angeles, California, before the
4 Honorable Fernando M. Olguin, Plaintiffs Brian Warner, Ryan Burns, Kenneth
5 Macleod, Michael Meade, Michael Watson, James Fuller, James Good, and Dale
6 Franquet will and hereby do move this Court pursuant to California Civil Code
7 §1780(d), the substantial benefit doctrine, California Code of Civil Procedure
8 §1021.5, the Settlement Agreement, and Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(h), for an order
9 awarding attorneys' fees and expenses and for service awards to each of the
10 Class Representatives.

11 This motion is based upon this Notice, the Memorandum of Points and
12 Authorities submitted herewith, the Supplemental Declaration of Timothy G.
13 Blood, the Declarations of Ben Barnow of Barnow and Associates, P.C., Michael
14 L. Roberts of Roberts Law Firm, P.A., Phillip J. Milligan of Milligan Law
15 Offices, and Jeffrey S. Hurst of Monteleone & McCrory, LLP, upon all papers
16 and pleadings on file herein, and further evidence and argument as the Court may
17 choose to entertain.

18
19 Dated: February 27, 2017

Respectfully submitted,
BLOOD HURST & O'REARDON, LLP
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on February 27, 2017, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the e-mail addresses denoted on the Electronic Mail Notice List and I hereby certify that I have mailed the foregoing document or paper via the United States Postal Service to the non-CM/ECF participants indicated on the Electronic Mail Notice List.

I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on February 27, 2017.

s/ Timothy G. Blood

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**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR
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1 Plaintiffs Brian Warner, Ryan Burns, Kenneth Macleod, Michael Meade,
2 Michael Watson, James Fuller, James Good, and Dale Franquet (“Plaintiffs” or
3 “Class Representatives”), by and through Class Counsel, respectfully submit this
4 memorandum in support of their motion for an award of attorneys’ fees and
5 expenses and plaintiff service awards.¹

6 **I. INTRODUCTION**

7 Plaintiffs’ Counsel obtained an outstanding result for Class Members. The
8 Class includes approximately 1.5 million vehicles and provides about \$3.4
9 billion-worth of benefits to the Class, including frame inspections and free frame
10 replacements, application of corrosion-resistant compounds to the frames, free
11 loaner vehicles, and 100% reimbursements to Class members who already paid
12 to have their frames replaced.

13 Plaintiffs seek an award of attorneys’ fees in the amount of \$9.75 million,
14 out-of-pocket expenses of \$117,500, and a \$2,500 service award for each Class
15 Representative. The requested fee is very modest relative to the Settlement,
16 representing less than 0.3% of the value of the Settlement and a multiplier of
17 2.92 on just Class Counsel’s lodestar. The \$9.75 million fee award is extremely
18 reasonable given the tremendous result obtained for the Class and the efforts
19 taken by Counsel to obtain that result. Likewise, a service award of \$2,500 to
20 each Class Representative is reasonable given the time and effort they put into
21 the Action.

22 **II. HISTORY OF THE LITIGATION**

23 The Parties’ negotiations regarding fees, expenses and service awards
24 were conducted only after agreement was reached on all of the other material
25 terms of the Settlement. The Settlement itself was reached after over two years of
26 litigation in two district courts, extensive investigation, discovery and
27

28 ¹ All capitalized terms shall have the same meanings set forth in the
November 8, 2016 Settlement Agreement, filed November 9, 2016. ECF No. 87.

1 consultation with experts, and over seven months of negotiations and with the
2 assistance of Special Master Patrick A. Juneau.²

3 **A. The Action**

4 This Action and the Related Action, *Burns v. Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A.,*
5 *Inc.*, No. 14-cv-02208 (W.D. Ark.) (together, the “Litigation”), are both class
6 actions against Toyota, one of the largest car companies in the world with a
7 history of vigorously defending class action cases brought against it. Blood
8 Prelim. Decl., ¶3. The Litigation concerns the structural integrity of the frames of
9 model year 2005 to 2010 Tacomas, 2007 to 2008 Tundras and 2005 to 2008
10 Sequoias (the “Subject Vehicles”). A vehicle’s frame is critical to its safe and
11 stable operation. A vehicle with a compromised frame is unsafe to drive.
12 Plaintiffs and Class Members who purchased Subject Vehicles expected them to
13 be reasonably protected from premature and excessive rust corrosion, and Toyota
14 represented the Subject Vehicles were of “the finest quality vehicle construction”
15 and were made with the “most advanced technology available [to] prevent
16 corrosion.” Second Amended Complaint, ECF No. 86 (“SAC”), ¶¶27, 177.

17 Plaintiffs allege that, contrary to this promise, the frames on the Subject
18 Vehicles were not properly treated during manufacture, resulting in the
19 possibility that a Subject Vehicle’s frame would suffer premature and extensive
20 rust corrosion that would compromise its structural integrity, safety, stability, and
21 crash-worthiness. *Id.* at ¶¶1-3, 17-26; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶10. Toyota was
22 aware the Subject Vehicles lacked adequate rust protection as evidenced by,
23 among other things, the Limited Service Campaigns (“LSC”) it implemented
24 over the years. However, Toyota’s LSCs were flawed and far too limited. SAC,
25 at ¶¶4-5, 27-62; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶12, 14-15, 28.

26
27 ² These efforts are detailed in the Declaration of Timothy G. Blood in
28 Support of Joint Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement,
ECF No. 88-2 (“Blood Prelim. Decl.”).

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1 On October 3, 2014, Plaintiff Ryan Burns filed a class action lawsuit
2 against Toyota after the frame on his 2005 Tacoma rusted through, resulting in
3 the engine dropping 2 to 3 inches and rendering the vehicle unstable and unsafe
4 to drive. *Burns* ECF No. 1; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶11. Burns alleged claims
5 against Toyota under the Arkansas Deceptive Trade Practice Act, for breach of
6 express and implied warranty, unjust enrichment and declaratory relief. *Burns*
7 ECF No. 1. Toyota moved to dismiss Burns's complaint and, after full briefing
8 and consideration, the Arkansas Court upheld the majority of Burns's claims,
9 dismissing only the warranty claims. *Burns* ECF Nos. 11-12, 21; Blood Prelim.
10 Decl., ¶¶16-18.

11 Meanwhile, on March 24, 2015, Plaintiffs who purchased or leased
12 Toyotas and experienced rust corrosion issues on their Subject Vehicles' frames
13 filed a class action against Toyota on behalf of a nationwide class for violations
14 of California consumer protection laws, declaratory relief, and breaches of
15 express and implied warranties, and alternatively, on behalf of state classes for
16 violations of consumer protection laws in Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, New
17 York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Texas. ECF
18 No. 1. On June 5, 2015, the Court entered an Order granting Toyota's motion to
19 dismiss with leave to amend, and on June 19, 2015, Plaintiffs filed an Amended
20 Class Action Complaint, asserting consumer protection claims under California,
21 Florida, Maryland, Ohio, New York, North Carolina, and Louisiana law and for
22 declaratory relief. ECF Nos. 38, 45. Toyota again moved to dismiss the
23 complaint. ECF No. 46. On March 8, 2016, the Court entered an Order granting
24 in part and denying in part Toyota's motion to dismiss, upholding the Maryland,
25 New York, and North Carolina consumer protection act claims based on
26 Toyota's alleged omissions. ECF No. 61; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶19-27.

27 ///

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1 Toyota aggressively defended these lawsuits. It moved for summary
2 judgment and preemptively moved to deny class certification in the *Burns* case.
3 While these motions were pending, Toyota actively resisted producing discovery.
4 The Arkansas Court denied Toyota's motion for summary judgment, except to
5 the extent Burns's claims sought injunctive relief and denied Toyota's
6 preemptive motion to deny class certification. *Burns* ECF No. 51; Blood Prelim.
7 Decl., ¶¶28-33.

8 In the meantime, Plaintiffs' Counsel continued to push for more discovery
9 from Toyota and third parties and vigorously conducted an independent
10 investigation. It retained and consulted with three experts (two with expertise in
11 structural vehicle integrity and safety) to evaluate and supplement the discovery
12 produced. Plaintiffs' Counsel spoke with dozens of individuals asserting that the
13 frame on their Toyota vehicle exhibited significant rust corrosion and analyzed
14 evidence of the corrosion. Counsel analyzed the photographs provided by these
15 individuals and obtained and reviewed articles, discussion board threads and
16 government website postings relating to Toyota's frame rust issues and the
17 scope, prevalence and potential causes of those issues. Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶3,
18 13, 26. Although Toyota initially resisted producing discovery, as a result of
19 Plaintiffs' Counsel's efforts, Toyota ultimately produced over 2,500,000 pages of
20 discovery, including over 4,000 pages of documents relating to the root cause of
21 the alleged defect. All of the materials produced were reviewed and analyzed by
22 a dedicated team of lawyers, including a bilingual attorney to review Japanese
23 language documents. Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶3, 34-46.

24 **B. Settlement Negotiations**

25 The Settlement was reached after seven months of extensive arm's-length
26 negotiations, which were assisted by Special Master Juneau. Class Counsel
27 participated in nine face-to-face meetings with Toyota's counsel during that
28 period. In between those meetings, Class Counsel negotiated through group

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1 conference calls, individual telephone calls and innumerable emails. *Id.* at ¶¶4,
2 47-56. Negotiations proceeded without regard to weekends, holidays, or time
3 zones. The result of all these mediation sessions, meetings and phone calls is a
4 remarkable Settlement that provides inspections of the frames for every Subject
5 Vehicle and new frames for all found to be sufficiently corroded.

6 **III. TERMS OF THE SETTLEMENT**

7 This Settlement delivers comprehensive relief to the Settlement Class,
8 which consists of all persons, entities or organizations who, at any time as of the
9 entry of the Preliminary Approval Order, own(ed), purchase(d), or lease(d)
10 Subject Vehicles distributed for sale or lease in any of the fifty States, the
11 District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and all other United States territories and/or
12 possessions. Settlement Agreement (“SA”), §II.A., ¶8. The Settlement benefits
13 include free frame inspections (unlimited during the period running from 12
14 years from the date the vehicle was first purchased or leased) and free frame
15 replacements, corrosion-resistant compound (“CRC”) application in certain
16 states,³ free loaner vehicles and if the Class member already paid to have their
17 frame replaced, reimbursements of their frame replacement costs. SA, §III.

18 To participate in the Frame Inspection and Replacement Program, a Class
19 Member need only take his or her Subject Vehicle to an authorized Toyota
20 Dealer for a frame inspection. *Id.*, §III.A. Toyota will inspect all Subject
21 Vehicles for rust (a cost of about \$60 per vehicle) and replace the frame on all
22 Subject Vehicles found to have a 10 mm or larger perforation (a cost of about
23 \$15,000 per vehicle). *Id.*; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶5. Class Members will have the
24

25 ³ The CRC States have high road salt use and environmental permits to
26 apply CRC are obtainable. The CRC States are Connecticut, Delaware, the
27 District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maryland,
28 Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Vermont, Wisconsin, and West Virginia.
SA, §III.A., ¶3 n.1.

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1 later of 12 years from the date the vehicle was first sold or leased, or one year
2 from entry of the Final Order and Final Judgment, to have their frame inspected
3 and replaced. SA, §III.A., ¶1.

4 If a Class Member disagrees with the results of an inspection, they may
5 take the Subject Vehicle to a second Toyota Dealer for another frame inspection,
6 all subject to Class Counsel's and the Court's oversight. *Id.* at ¶4; Blood Prelim.
7 Decl., ¶7. And if a frame inspection or replacement requires the Subject Vehicle
8 to be kept at the Toyota Dealer, Class Members will receive a free loaner vehicle.
9 SA, §III.A., ¶2; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶6. The Toyota dealers, who are
10 independent from Toyota, are well-suited and incentivized to aggressively
11 conduct frame inspections and replacements because they receive full payment
12 for the work they perform.

13 Class Members whose Subject Vehicles are registered in a CRC State may
14 bring their vehicles to a Toyota Dealer to be evaluated for CRC application for a
15 two-year period and Toyota will mail reminders to such Class Members when
16 there are six months left in the CRC application period. SA, §III.A., ¶3; Blood
17 Prelim. Decl., ¶5.

18 To receive a full reimbursement for frame replacements already paid for
19 by a Class Member, the Class Member need only submit a simple claim form and
20 documents showing the frame was replaced because of rust and the replacement
21 costs he or she paid. SA, §III.B; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶6.

22 Class Members may obtain all the benefits of the Settlement without
23 releasing their claims for personal injury, wrongful death, or actual physical
24 property damage arising from an accident involving a Subject Vehicle. *Id.*,
25 §VII.B. Moreover, Class Members' benefits will not be diminished by an award
26 of attorneys' fees and expenses because the amount awarded by the Court will be
27 paid by Toyota separate and apart from consideration paid to Class Members. *Id.*,
28

1 §VIII.A-B; Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶9.⁴

2 In short, the Settlement represents a tremendous victory for the Class,
3 achieving the very purpose of filing this lawsuit: frame inspections for all
4 Subject Vehicles and frame replacements for all that need it.

5 **IV. THE COURT SHOULD AWARD THE REQUESTED**
6 **ATTORNEYS' FEES**

7 **A. Plaintiffs' Counsel Are Entitled to Fees**

8 In diversity actions like this one, “the Ninth Circuit applies state law [to]
9 determine[] the right to fees and the method for calculating fees.” *Hartless v.*
10 *Clorox Co.*, 273 F.R.D. 630, 642 (S.D. Cal. 2011), *aff'd*, 473 Fed. Appx. 716
11 (9th Cir. 2012), (citing *Mangold v. Cal. Pub. Utils. Comm'n*, 67 F.3d 1470, 1478
12 (9th Cir. 1995)). Here, Plaintiffs' Counsel are entitled to an award of attorneys'
13 fees and expenses under the fee-shifting provision of the CLRA, under the
14 substantial benefit doctrine, and by agreement of the Parties.

15 Pursuant to the CLRA's mandatory fee-shifting provision, “[t]he court
16 shall award court costs and attorney's fees to a prevailing plaintiff in litigation
17 filed pursuant to this section.” Cal. Civ. Code §1780(e); *see also Graciano v.*
18 *Robinson Ford Sales, Inc.*, 144 Cal. App. 4th 140, 160 (2006). Such an award
19 “is mandatory, even where the litigation is resolved by a pre-trial settlement
20 agreement.” *In re Nucoa Real Margarine Litig.*, No. 10-cv-00927, 2012 U.S.
21 Dist. LEXIS 189901, at *84 (C.D. Cal. June 12, 2012) (citation omitted). Since
22 the CLRA does not define the term “prevailing plaintiff,” “the court should adopt
23 a pragmatic approach, determining prevailing party status based on which party
24 succeeded on a practical level,” such as “the extent to which each party has
25 realized its litigation objectives, whether by judgment, settlement, or otherwise.”

26
27 ⁴ *See also* the concurrently filed Supplemental Declaration of Timothy G.
28 Blood in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Attorneys' Fees, Expenses and
Service Awards (“Blood Suppl. Decl.”), ¶2.

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1 *Graciano*, 144 Cal. App. 4th at 150-51; *accord Nucoa*, 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS
2 189901, at *84-85. Here, Plaintiffs have fully realized their litigation objectives
3 by obtaining an excellent settlement, which includes free frame inspections and
4 frame replacements, free loaner vehicles and full reimbursements for out-of-
5 pocket frame replacement costs incurred by any Class Member.

6 Additionally, Plaintiffs' Counsel are entitled to fees and expenses because
7 "[u]nder California law, courts have the power to award reasonable attorneys'
8 fees and costs where, as here, a litigant proceeding in a representative capacity
9 secures a 'substantial benefit' for a class of persons." *Altamirano v. Shaw Indus.*,
10 No. 13-cv-00939, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 44056, at *16 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 31,
11 2016) (citing *Serrano v. Priest*, 20 Cal. 3d 25, 38 (1977)). *See also Johnston v.*
12 *Comerica Mortg. Corp.*, 83 F.3d 241, 244, 247 (8th Cir. 1996). The "substantial
13 benefit" may be pecuniary or nonpecuniary in nature. *Serrano*, 20 Cal. 3d at 38.

14 Finally, through the Settlement, the Parties entered into a contract where
15 Toyota agreed to pay Plaintiffs' Counsel's attorneys' fees and expenses in the
16 amounts awarded by the Court of up to \$9.75 million for fees and up to \$150,000
17 for costs and expenses. SA, §VIII.B.

18 **B. The Fee Amount Sought Is Reasonable**

19 Plaintiffs seek an award of attorneys' fees of \$9.75 million, representing a
20 multiplier of approximately 2.92 to Class Counsel's lodestar of \$3,348,823.50
21 (with an even greater lodestar when the other Plaintiffs' Counsel's time is
22 included) and which is less than 0.3% of the estimated value of the benefits to
23 Class Members under the Settlement.⁵ Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶¶3, 11.

24
25 ⁵ The cost of the frame inspections is approximately \$90 million (\$60 per
26 inspection of each of the 1.5 million vehicles). SA, §III.A. The cost of the frame
27 replacements is around \$3.375 billion (\$15,000 per replacement of 225,000
28 vehicles), assuming the same rate of replacement following inspection from
limited service campaigns. Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶5, 8. The notice costs, which
will also be paid by Toyota, are estimated to be between \$1.75 million to \$2.5

1 The Ninth Circuit and California state “[c]ourts recognize two methods for
2 calculating attorney fees in civil class actions: the lodestar/multiplier method and
3 the percentage of recovery method.” *Wershba v. Apple Comput., Inc.*, 91 Cal.
4 App. 4th 224, 254 (2001) (citing *Zucker v. Occidental Petroleum Corp.*, 968 F.
5 Supp. 1396, 1400 (C.D. Cal. 1997)); *Hanlon v. Chrysler Corp.*, 150 F.3d 1011,
6 1029 (9th Cir. 1998). The choice of a fee calculation method, either the
7 percentage or lodestar approach, is generally within the trial court’s discretion,
8 with the goal being “the award of a reasonable fee to compensate counsel for
9 their efforts.” *Laffitte v. Robert Half Int’l, Inc.*, 1 Cal. 5th 480, 504 (2016). *See*
10 *also Stanger v. China Elec. Motor, Inc.*, 812 F.3d 734, 739 (9th Cir. 2016)
11 (regardless of the method used, “[r]easonableness is the goal” for a fee award
12 (quoting *Fischel v. Equitable Life Assur. Soc’y of the U.S.*, 307 F.3d 997, 1007
13 (9th Cir. 2002))).

14 **1. The Requested Fee Is Reasonable Under the Percentage of**
15 **Fund Approach**

16 Federal courts, including the Ninth Circuit, have developed a strong
17 preference for using a percentage-of-the-recovery method. *Six (6) Mexican*
18 *Workers v. Ariz. Citrus Growers*, 904 F.2d 1301, 1311 (1990). California state
19 courts also recognize the advantages of the percentage method – relative ease of
20 calculation, alignment of incentives between counsel and the class, a better
21 approximation of market conditions in a contingency case, and the
22 encouragement it provides counsel to seek an early settlement and avoid
23 unnecessarily prolonging the litigation – and are convinced that “the percentage
24 method is a valuable tool that should not be denied our trial courts.” *Laffitte*, 1
25 Cal. 5th at 503.

26
27 million. *See* Declaration of Jeanne C. Finegan, ECF No. 88-3, ¶52. Therefore, the
28 actual estimated value of the Settlement is approximately \$3.4 billion. Blood
Prelim. Decl., ¶¶5, 8.

1 The Ninth Circuit's "benchmark" for awarding fees is 25% of the total
2 recovery, but percentages in the range of 20% to 33-1/3% of the value of the
3 recovery are typical. *See Powers v. Eichen*, 229 F.3d 1249, 1256 (9th Cir. 2000);
4 *Vizcaino v. Microsoft Corp.*, 290 F.3d 1043, 1050 (9th Cir. 2002) (affirming a
5 28% fee award); *Six Mexican Workers*, 904 F.2d at 1311 (affirming 25% fee
6 award); *Vasquez v. Coast Valley Roofing, Inc.*, 266 F.R.D. 482, 491 (E.D. Cal.
7 2010) (approving 33 1/3% fee award as fair and reasonable). *See also Laffitte*, 1
8 Cal. 5th at 486, 506 (affirming fee award of one-third of the gross settlement
9 amount); *Bell v. Farmers Ins. Exch.*, 115 Cal. App. 4th 715, 726 (2004) (noting
10 fee award of 25%); *Parker v. Los Angeles*, 44 Cal. App. 3d 556, 567-68 (1974)
11 (affirming award of one-third (33 1/3%) of the recovery).

12 In determining the amount of the benefit conferred, the appropriate
13 measure is the total recovery available for the class, not the amount actually
14 claimed. *See Boeing Co. v. Van Gemert*, 444 U.S. 472, 479-81 (1980); *accord*
15 *Williams v. MGM-Pathe Commc'ns Co.*, 129 F.3d 1026, 1027 (9th Cir. 1997).
16 This method recognizes that the efforts of Plaintiffs' Counsel established the
17 entire Settlement, including nonmonetary benefits, for the benefit of the entire
18 Class. *See Masters v. Wilhelmina Model Agency, Inc.*, 473 F.3d 423, 437 (2d Cir.
19 2007) (citing *Williams*, 129 F.3d at 1027); *Vizcaino*, 290 F.3d at 1049.

20 In determining whether the percentage requested is fair and reasonable,
21 courts may consider a range of factors, including: (1) the results achieved; (2) the
22 risk of litigation; (3) the skill required; (4) the quality of work; and (5) the
23 contingent nature of the fee and the financial burden. *Vizcaino*, 290 F.3d at 1048-
24 50; *see also Laffitte*, 1 Cal. 5th at 504 (same).

25 **2. Plaintiffs' Counsel Achieved an Excellent Result for the**
26 **Class**

27 In determining the reasonableness of a fee request, the "most critical factor
28 is the degree of success obtained." *Hensley v. Eckerhart*, 461 U.S. 424, 436

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1 (1983), *superseded on other grounds by statute*, Prison Litigation Reform Act,
2 42 U.S.C. §1997e, *as recognized in Whitehead v. Colvin*, No. 15-cv-05143, 2016
3 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 51085, at *5 (W.D. Wash. Apr. 14, 2016). *See also Heritage*
4 *Pac. Fin., LLC v. Monroy*, 215 Cal. App. 4th 972, 1005 (2013) (same); *Feminist*
5 *Women's Health Ctr. v. Blythe*, 32 Cal. App. 4th 1641, 1674 n.8 (1995) (same).

6 The results achieved through the Settlement are exceptional and they alone
7 justify the requested fee award. After contentious litigation involving three
8 rounds of motions to dismiss, a motion for summary judgment, a motion for
9 denial of class certification, multiple discovery requests and depositions, analysis
10 of over 2.5 million pages of documents, witness interviews, expert analysis, and
11 seven months of settlement negotiations, Plaintiffs' Counsel obtained an
12 incredible settlement: frame inspections for all Class Members; a second
13 inspection if the Class Member disagrees with the result; frame replacements for
14 those that need it; free loaner vehicles; CRC application to certain frames;
15 reimbursements of out-of-pocket expenses for frame replacements; and retention
16 of claims for personal injury, wrongful death, or actual physical property damage
17 arising from an accident involving a Subject Vehicle. *See* Blood Prelim. Decl.,
18 ¶¶3-56; SA, §§III., VII.B.

19 The Settlement provides Class Members with prompt, high-value benefits
20 and avoids the risks of the liability phase, which might have taken years to
21 determine. These are significant benefits for the Class. Accordingly, a percentage
22 of the overall recovery that falls well below the benchmark is justified.

23 **3. Plaintiffs' Counsel Assumed Significant Risks in This**
24 **Very Complex Litigation**

25 The risk, expense, and complexity of the Litigation also demonstrate the
26 reasonableness of the fee award. At the same time that Plaintiffs' Counsel were
27 ready to proceed with trial, they knew the Class faced obstacles. Class
28 certification could have been a risky and complex undertaking. Expensive and

1 extensive expert analysis and testimony would be necessary to identify the
2 defect, show that it is common to the class of Subject Vehicles that includes three
3 models spanning over five years, and prove that it causes excessive rust
4 corrosion and perforation, which is unrelated to and separate from normal surface
5 rust. This factor alone would lead to *Daubert*⁶ motions and motions *in limine*.
6 Other arguments raised by Toyota in its motion to preemptively deny class
7 certification could have impacted certification, including choice-of-law issues.

8 After certification, significant time and expense would continue to be
9 incurred to conclude expert discovery, to move for or defend against summary
10 judgment, to conduct trial and to handle appeals that are almost inevitable in a
11 case of this size. Moreover, the risk of maintaining class action status through
12 trial is not merely hypothetical, as evidenced by recent decisions denying class
13 certification in automobile defect cases. *See, e.g., Marcus v. BMW of N. Am.,*
14 *LLC*, 687 F.3d 583 (3d Cir. 2012); *Daigle v. Ford Motor Co.*, No. 09-cv-03214,
15 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 106172 (D. Minn. July 31, 2012); *Corder v. Ford Motor*
16 *Co.*, 283 F.R.D. 337 (W.D. Ky. 2012); *Edwards v. Ford Motor Co.*, No. 11-cv-
17 01058, 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 81330 (C.D. Cal. June 12, 2012), *rev'd on other*
18 *grounds*, 603 Fed. Appx. 538 (9th Cir. 2015); *Cholakyan v. Mercedes-Benz USA,*
19 *LLC*, 281 F.R.D. 534 (C.D. Cal. 2012); *In re Ford Motor Co. E-350 Van Prods.*
20 *Liab. Litig.*, No. 03-cv-04558, 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 13887 (D.N.J. Feb. 6,
21 2012); *Am. Honda Motor Co., Inc. v. Super. Ct.*, 199 Cal. App. 4th 1367 (2011).

22 Plaintiffs' Counsel incurred 100% of the risk in litigating this Action.
23 Class Counsel in particular was forced to forego other employment in order to
24 devote the time and resources necessary to pursue this litigation. Blood Suppl.
25 Decl., ¶4. Throughout this time, there was no assurance of success or
26 compensation. The requested fee award is entirely reasonable in light of the
27 substantial risks incurred.

28 ⁶ *Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharms., Inc.*, 509 U.S. 579 (1993).

1 **4. Counsel Provided High-Quality Work**

2 Class Counsel are experienced in complex class litigation and have
3 substantial experience prosecuting consumer class actions involving automobiles
4 in particular, or otherwise contributed with particularized knowledge needed for
5 the case. Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶2, 58-59 and Exs. A and B.⁷ Class Counsel have
6 a thorough understanding of the issues presented by these types of cases and
7 through their skill and reputation, were able to obtain a settlement that provides
8 everything the Class could reasonably hope to obtain in this Litigation.

9 This Litigation was not easy. Toyota hired several highly capable and
10 aggressive law firms to represent it, and it has resources to engage in the battle of
11 the experts that would have surely ensued if not for reaching a settlement.
12 Plaintiffs' Counsel successfully persevered through the multiple rounds of
13 motions to dismiss, extensive discovery and depositions, and the motion to deny
14 class certification, finally achieving the very purpose of filing this Action: free
15 frame inspections and frame replacements for the Class Members.

16 The skill and tenacity of Plaintiffs' Counsel was put to the test throughout
17 this Litigation, but it resulted in an exceptional settlement for the Class and
18 justifies the requested attorneys' fee award.

19 **5. Plaintiffs' Counsel Took the Case on a Contingency Basis**

20 An attorney whose compensation is dependent on success – who takes a
21 significant risk of no compensation – should expect a significantly higher fee
22 than an attorney who is paid a market rate as the case goes along, win or lose.
23 *Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy v. Siller*, 520 B.R. 796, 812 (E.D. Cal. 2014);
24 *Ketchum v. Moses*, 24 Cal. 4th 1122, 1132-33 (2001). Plaintiffs' Counsel
25 undertook the Litigation solely on a contingent basis, with no guarantee of
26 recovery. Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶4; Barnow Decl., ¶16. Despite such a challenge,

27 _____
28 ⁷ See also the concurrently filed Declaration of Ben Barnow (“Barnow Decl.”), ¶2 and Ex. A.

1 Plaintiffs' Counsel were able to demonstrate to Toyota that it faced significant
2 exposure such that it entered into a superb settlement agreement.

3 **6. No Class Members Have Objected to the Requested Fees**

4 Plaintiffs' intention to request attorneys' fees (and the amount) was
5 provided to each Class Member in the Court-approved Class Notice and in
6 information found on the Settlement website. *See* ECF No. 87-1, Ex. 4. As of the
7 filing of this brief, no one has objected to the amount of attorneys' fees sought.⁸
8 Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶5. The last day to object is March 27, 2017. ECF No. 98 at
9 29-30, ¶11. The lack of objection signifies the Class Members' approval of the
10 requested attorneys' fees. *See In re Heritage Bond Litig.*, No. 02-ML-1475 DT,
11 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 13555, at *70 (C.D. Cal. June 10, 2005) ("The existence
12 or absence of objectors to the requested attorneys' fee is a factor in determining
13 the appropriate fee award.").

14 **C. The Requested Fee Is Reasonable Under a Lodestar/Multiplier**
15 **Crosscheck**

16 "[T]rial courts have discretion to conduct a lodestar cross-check on a
17 percentage fee" award. *Laffitte*, 1 Cal. 5th at 500, 506. Under the two-step
18 lodestar/multiplier method, trial courts first calculate the lodestar, consisting of
19 all the hours reasonably spent multiplied by reasonable hourly rates. *See Blum v.*
20 *Stenson*, 465 U.S. 886, 888 (1984); *Morales v. City of San Rafael*, 96 F.3d 359,
21 363 (9th Cir. 1996), *reh'g denied, amended on other grounds by* 108 F.3d 981
22 (9th Cir. 1997); *Ketchum*, 24 Cal. 4th at 1133. That figure may be enhanced or
23 multiplied to account for other factors which are not subsumed within it.⁹

24 _____
25 ⁸ One objector stated that "[t]he proposed settlement largely benefits the
26 attorneys pressing this case," but he did not specifically raise and issue regarding
the amount of attorneys' fees. ECF No. 107.

27 ⁹ The factors already taken into account by the lodestar calculation are:
28 "(1) the novelty and complexity of the issues, (2) the special skill and
experience of counsel, (3) the quality of representation, . . . (4) the results

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1 *Ferland v. Conrad Credit Corp.*, 244 F.3d 1145, 1149 n.4 (9th Cir. 2001). This
2 allows the court “to fix a fee at the fair market value for the particular action.”
3 *Syers Props. III v. Rankin*, 226 Cal. App. 4th 691, 697-98 (2014) (quoting
4 *Ketchum*, 24 Cal. 4th at 1132). The purpose of using the lodestar/multiplier
5 method is to mirror the legal marketplace: the adjusted lodestar should not
6 significantly differ from the percentage fee freely negotiated in comparable
7 litigation. *Lealao v. Beneficial Cal., Inc.*, 82 Cal. App. 4th 19, 50 (2000).

8 In this case, Class Counsel’s lodestar alone is over \$3,348,823. Blood
9 Suppl. Decl., ¶¶3, 11; Barnow Decl., ¶¶3, 20. The requested \$9.75 million fee
10 award represents a modest multiplier of approximately 2.92 on this amount.

11 **1. The Hourly Rates Are Reasonable**

12 Reasonable hourly rates are determined by “prevailing market rates in the
13 relevant community.” *Blum*, 465 U.S. at 895. Typically, the forum where the
14 district court sits is recognized as the “relevant community.” *Shirrod v. Dir.*,
15 *OWCP*, 809 F.3d 1082, 1087 (9th Cir. 2015) (citing *Christensen v. Stevedoring*
16 *Servs. of Am.*, 557 F.3d 1049, 1053 (9th Cir. 2009)). Thus, Plaintiffs’ Counsel are
17 entitled to the hourly rates charged by attorneys of comparable experience,
18 reputation, and ability for similar litigation. *Blum*, 465 U.S. at 895 n.11;
19 *Ketchum*, 24 Cal. 4th at 1133. *See also Serrano v. Unruh*, 32 Cal. 3d 621, 640
20 n.31 (1982) (“The formula by which ‘reasonable market value’ is reached is
21 variously phrased” as “comparable salaries earned by private attorneys with
22 similar experience and expertise in equivalent litigation,” and the “hourly amount

23
24
25 obtained,’ and (5) the contingent nature of the fee agreement.” *Morales*, 96 F.3d
26 at 364 n.9 (citation omitted). Other factors include: (1) time and labor required;
27 (2) preclusion of other employment by the attorney due to acceptance of the case;
28 (3) customary fee; (4) time limitations imposed by the client or the
circumstances; (5) undesirability of the case; (6) nature and length of the
professional relationship with the client; and (7) awards in similar cases. *Kerr v.*
Screen Extras Guild, Inc., 526 F.2d 67, 70 (9th Cir. 1975).

1 to which attorneys of like skill in the area would typically be entitled.”) (citations
2 omitted).

3 Plaintiffs’ Counsel’s background, experience, and hourly rates are set forth
4 in their concurrently filed declarations, and in the case of Blood Hurst &
5 O’Reardon, LLP (“BHO”), also in Mr. Blood’s declaration in support of
6 preliminary approval.¹⁰ BHO has an excellent reputation as class action litigators,
7 with specialized experience in consumer protection class action law, including
8 those cases involving automobiles. Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶¶2, 58 and Ex. A.
9 Barnow and Associates, P.C. (“Barnow”) has decades of experience leading and
10 successfully resolving some of the nation’s largest consumer class actions,
11 including automobile cases. Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶59 and Ex. B; Barnow Decl.,
12 ¶2 and Ex. A.

13 Declarations of the plaintiffs’ attorneys regarding prevailing fees in the
14 community and rate determinations in other cases “are satisfactory evidence of
15 the prevailing market rate.” *United Steelworkers of Am. v. Phelps Dodge Corp.*,
16 896 F.2d 403, 407 (9th Cir. 1990). The hourly rates of Class Counsel (between
17 \$560 and \$850 for partners and between \$320 and \$650 for associates) are well
18 within the range of rates billed by comparable attorneys in this market and are
19 the standard rates they charge to all of their clients.¹¹ Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶¶9-12;
20 Barnow Decl., ¶¶20-21.

21
22
23 ¹⁰ See Blood Prelim. Decl.; Blood Suppl. Decl.; Barnow Decl.; Declaration
24 of Michael L. Roberts of Roberts Law Firm, P.A. (“Roberts Decl.”); Declaration
25 of Phillip J. Milligan of Milligan Law Offices (“Milligan Decl.”); and
Declaration of Jeffrey S. Hurst of Monteleone & McCrory, LLP (“Hurst Decl.”).

26 ¹¹ An attorney’s actual billing rate for similar work is presumptively
27 appropriate. See *People Who Care v. Rockford Bd. of Educ.*, 90 F.3d 1307, 1310
28 (7th Cir. 1996); accord *In re Animation Workers Antitrust Litig.*, No. 14-cv-
04062, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 156720, at *20 (N.D. Cal. Nov. 11, 2016). See
also *Wershba*, 91 Cal. App. 4th at 254-55.

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1 The hourly rates are reasonable and consistent with what attorneys of
2 comparable skill charge for complex litigation in the Central District of
3 California. *See Chambers v. Whirlpool Corp.*, No. 11-cv-01733, 2016 U.S. Dist.
4 LEXIS 140839, at *52 (C.D. Cal. Oct. 11, 2016) (finding Los Angeles to be the
5 legal market for the Central District and citing with approval the “National Law
6 Journal survey of regional billing rates published in 2014, showing standard
7 partner rates among top Los Angeles firms ranges from \$490 to \$975”). The
8 rates charged by Plaintiffs’ Counsels’ firms fall well within that framework.

9 The reasonableness of Class Counsel’s rates is further demonstrated by the
10 fact that district courts within this Circuit have approved fee requests filed by
11 BHO and Barnow. *See, e.g., Hartless*, 273 F.R.D. at 644 (approving hourly rates
12 of Blood Hurst & O’Reardon, LLP, stating that “based on the Court’s familiarity
13 with the rates charged by other firms in the San Diego area, the Court finds the
14 rates charged by the attorneys and paralegals in this action reasonable”); *Makaeff*
15 *v. Trump Univ., LLC*, No. 10-cv-00940, 2015 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 46749, at *12-14
16 (S.D. Cal. Apr. 9, 2015) (approving rates of \$250-\$440 for associates and \$600-
17 \$825 for partners); *In re Sony Gaming Networks and Customer Data Sec. Breach*
18 *Litig.*, MDL No. 11-2258, No. 11-cv-02119 at ECF No. 47 (S.D. Cal. May 4,
19 2015) (approving attorneys’ fee request by BHO and Barnow.); *Johnson v. Gen.*
20 *Mills, Inc.*, No. 10-cv-00061, 2013 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 90338, at *19-21 and n.3
21 (C.D. Cal. June 17, 2013) (approving hourly rates and time spent by BHO,
22 stating “[t]he Court has considered class counsel’s rates and finds they are
23 reasonable because of the experience of the attorneys and prevailing market
24 rates”); *Shames v. Hertz Corp.*, No. 07-cv-02174, 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS
25 158577, at *60 (S.D. Cal. Nov. 5, 2012) (approving hourly rates based on
26 *Hartless*); *Dennis v. Kellogg Co.*, No. 09-cv-01786, 2013 U.S. Dist. LEXIS
27 163118, at *22-23 (S.D. Cal. Nov. 14, 2013) (approving hourly rates of BHO as
28 “fall[ing] within typical rates for attorneys of comparable experience”).

1 Another way to measure rates is by comparison to billing surveys. The
2 National Law Journal Billing Survey (“NLJ Survey”) provides the following for
3 certain Southern California firms: Irell & Manella (\$800-\$975 partner rates,
4 \$395-\$750 associate rates); O’Melveny & Myers (\$615-\$950 partner rates); and
5 Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton (\$490-\$875 partner rates, \$275-\$535
6 associate rates). *See* Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶12 and Ex. 5 (2014 NLJ Survey).¹²
7 Thus, BHO’s hourly rates of \$320.00 to \$810.00 and the hourly rates of \$350.00
8 to \$850.00 for the Barnow attorneys (together, Class Counsel) are reasonable.

9 2. The Hours Expended Are Reasonable

10 As of February 24, 2017, Class Counsel and their firms alone had spent
11 7,021 hours litigating this Action. Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶11; Barnow Decl., ¶¶3,
12 20. Plaintiffs’ Counsel’s declarations outline the work they performed.¹³ *Webb v.*
13 *Bd. of Educ.*, 471 U.S. 234, 243 (1985). As detailed above and in the
14 declarations, these hours include: drafting oppositions to three rounds of motions
15 to dismiss, a motion for summary judgment, and a motion for denial of class
16 certification; propounding and responding to discovery requests; reviewing and
17 analyzing over 2.5 million pages of documents from Toyota and third parties;
18 negotiating the Settlement; preparing the Settlement Agreement and its exhibits;
19 and speaking with and counseling over 500 Class Members. Blood Prelim. Decl.,
20 ¶¶3-4, 11-56; Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶¶6, 8, 10. The fee award should also include
21 time Plaintiffs’ Counsel has spent and will spend to establish and defend the
22 attorneys’ fee claim. *Serrano*, 32 Cal. 3d at 639.

23
24 ¹² Rates for Chicago, Illinois, where Class Counsel Barnow’s office is
25 located, are also in line with Southern California rates. *See* Blood Suppl. Decl.,
26 ¶12 and Ex. 5 (2014 NLJ Survey) (listing the following rates for certain Chicago,
27 Illinois firms: Kirkland & Ellis (\$590-\$995 partner rates, \$235-\$715 associate
28 rates); Seyfarth Shaw (\$375-\$860 partner rates, \$225-\$505 associate rates); and
Winston & Strawn (\$650-\$995 partner rates, \$425-\$590 associate rates)).

¹³ *See generally* Blood Prelim. Decl.; Blood Suppl. Decl.; Barnow Decl.;
Roberts Decl.; Milligan Decl.; Hurst Decl.

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1 Moreover, additional work will be required. Class Counsel must still:
2 (1) prepare for and attend the final approval hearing, including the research and
3 drafting of the reply papers and responses to objections; (2) continue to respond
4 to the many inquiries from Class Members; (3) oversee the Settlement, which
5 will continue to be implemented through 2023; (4) oversee the claims
6 administration process, including addressing any claim review issues; and
7 (5) handle any appeals.¹⁴ Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶¶7, 13. If there are appeals,
8 hundreds of thousands of dollars of additional attorney time may be incurred in
9 post-judgment motions (such as appeal bond requests) and in defending the
10 Settlement on appeal to the Ninth Circuit. None of this additional time will be
11 compensated.

12 **3. The Modest Multiplier Confirms the Reasonableness of**
13 **the Requested Fee**

14 Courts often enhance the lodestar with a multiplier. *Vizcaino*, 290 F.3d at
15 1051 (citing *In re Wash. Pub. Power Supply Sys. Sec. Litig.*, 19 F.3d 1291, 1300
16 (9th Cir. 1994)). As stated above, the purpose of this practice is to mirror the
17 legal marketplace by rewarding attorneys for taking and winning contingency
18 cases. *Id.*; see also *Lealao*, 82 Cal. App. 4th at 50. Courts consider various
19 factors in determining a multiplier, including the novelty and complexity of the
20 litigation, counsel's skill and experience, the quality of representation, the results
21 obtained, and the contingent nature of the fee agreement. See *Morales*, 96 F.3d at
22 364; *Kerr*, 526 F.2d at 70. See also *Laffitte*, 1 Cal. 5th at 489 (same); *Lealao*, 82

23 _____
24 ¹⁴ Class Counsel have already spent significant time and effort working with
25 the over 500 Class Members who have contacted them with questions about the
26 Settlement, what their options are, when they can obtain an inspection, and how
27 they can get help with immediate frame rust issues. Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶8. Class
28 Counsel have in turn worked with Toyota's counsel so that frame issues
requiring immediate attention are dealt with. *Id.* Class Counsel's assistance to
Class Members will continue to throughout implementation of the Settlement
benefits. *Id.*, ¶¶7-8, 13.

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1 Cal. App. 4th at 26 (same).

2 The requested fee award represents a modest multiplier of 2.92 based only
3 on the time spent by Class Counsel on the case to date – an amount well within
4 the accepted range for class action cases. “In the Ninth Circuit, multipliers
5 ‘ranging from one to four are frequently awarded . . . when the lodestar method is
6 applied.’” *Chambers*, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 140839, at *57 (quoting *Vizcaino*,
7 290 F.3d at 1051 n.6). *See also Wershba*, 91 Cal. App. 4th at 255 (“Multipliers
8 can range from 2 to 4, or even higher.”); 4 Alba Conte & Herbert B. Newberg,
9 *Newberg on Class Actions* §14:6 (4th ed. 2002) (“Multiples ranging from one to
10 four frequently are awarded in common fund when the lodestar method is
11 applied.”); *Steiner v. Am. Broad. Co., Inc.*, 248 Fed. Appx. 780, 783 (9th Cir.
12 2007) (holding that a multiplier of 6.85 “falls well within the range of multipliers
13 that courts have allowed”); *Sternwest Corp. v. Ash*, 183 Cal. App. 3d 74, 76
14 (1986) (case remanded with directions “to enhance the lodestar award by such
15 factor (two, three, four or otherwise) that the court, in its discretion shall deem
16 proper”); *Vizcaino*, 290 F.3d at 1051 and n.6 (multiplier of 3.65); *Keith v. Volpe*,
17 501 F. Supp. 403, 414 (C.D. Cal. 1980) (multiplier of 3.5); *Buccellato v. AT&T*
18 *Operations, Inc.*, No. 10-cv-00463, 2011 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 85699, at *4-5 (N.D.
19 Cal. June 30, 2011) (collecting cases and approving multiplier of 4.3).

20 As discussed above, the benefits for the Class, the complexity of this
21 Action, Plaintiffs’ Counsel’s skill displayed in effectively and efficiently
22 prosecuting this Action, the preclusion of accepting other work, and the
23 contingent nature of the fee award support the application of a modest 2.92
24 multiplier.

25 **V. PLAINTIFFS’ COUNSEL ARE ENTITLED TO**
26 **REIMBURSEMENT OF LITIGATION EXPENSES**

27 Plaintiffs’ Counsel request reimbursement of the expenses they advanced
28 to prosecute the Litigation, and Toyota has agreed to pay these expenses up to

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1 \$150,000. SA, §VIII.B. California and the Ninth Circuit both allow recovery of
2 litigation costs in the context of class action settlements. *See Staton v. Boeing*
3 *Co.*, 327 F.3d 938, 974 (9th Cir. 2003); *Serrano*, 20 Cal. 3d at 35. “Attorneys
4 may recover their reasonable expenses that would typically be billed to paying
5 clients in non-contingency matters.” *In re Omnivision Techs., Inc.*, 559 F. Supp.
6 2d 1036, 1048 (N.D. Cal. 2007) (citing *Harris v. Marhoefer*, 24 F.3d 16, 19 (9th
7 Cir. 1994)).

8 In the aggregate, Class Counsel and other Plaintiffs’ Counsel have
9 incurred expenses in the amount of \$114,348.22 for the Litigation, and will incur
10 approximately \$3,000 to travel to the final approval hearing. *See Blood Suppl.*
11 *Decl.*, ¶¶15-16; *Barnow Decl.*, ¶¶3, 24-25. *See also generally* *Roberts Decl.* and
12 *Milligan Decl.* All of these expenses are the types typically charged to paying
13 clients in the marketplace and are also routinely reimbursed in class action
14 settlements. For example, in *In re Immune Response Sec. Litig.*, 497 F. Supp. 2d
15 1166, 1177 (S.D. Cal. 2007), the awarded expenses included: “1) meals, hotels,
16 and transportation; 2) photocopies; 3) postage, telephone, and fax; 4) filing fees;
17 5) messenger and overnight delivery; 6) online legal research; 7) class action
18 notices; 8) experts, consultants, and investigators; and 9) mediation fees.”

19 Indeed, other than office overhead, “all reasonable expenses incurred in
20 case preparation, during the course of litigation, or as an aspect of settlement of
21 the case” are subject to reimbursement. *In re Media Vision Tech. Sec. Litig.*, 913
22 F. Supp. 1362, 1368 (N.D. Cal. 1996); *see also Hartless*, 273 F.R.D. at 645-46 (a
23 common fund class action settlement where the court awarded litigation costs for
24 consultants, online legal research, copying, postage, fax and long distance
25 charges, travel expenses, filing fees, mediation fees, and investigation fees).

26 Plaintiffs’ Counsel’s out-of-pocket expenses are all the types of expenses
27 normally charged to paying clients, were all incurred in the course of the
28 Litigation, were necessary to the Litigation and are not included in the overhead

1 of Plaintiffs' Counsel's hourly rates. *See* Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶¶14-16; Barnow
2 Decl., ¶¶17, 23. *See also* Roberts Decl. and Milligan Decl.

3 As detailed in Plaintiffs' Counsel's declarations, the expenses sought are
4 for travel costs, filing fees, service of process, electronic document management,
5 photocopies, overnight delivery, online legal research and conference calls. *See*
6 Blood Suppl. Decl., ¶¶15-16; Barnow Decl., ¶¶24-25. *See also* Roberts Decl. and
7 Milligan Decl. Though all Plaintiffs' Counsel's expenses currently total
8 approximately \$114,350, that number will increase as Class Counsel seek final
9 approval of the Settlement and work to implement the Settlement benefits. Blood
10 Suppl. Decl., ¶¶7, 13, 16. Thus, Plaintiffs' Counsel's request for reimbursement
11 of \$117,500 in out-of-pocket expenses should be granted.

12 **VI. THE PLAINTIFF SERVICE AWARDS SHOULD BE APPROVED**

13 “Incentive awards are fairly typical in class action cases.” *Rodriguez v. W.*
14 *Publ’g Corp.*, 563 F.3d 948, 958 (9th Cir. 2009) (citing 4 William B. Rubenstein
15 *et al.*, *Newberg on Class Actions* §11:38 (4th ed. 2008). *See also* *Cellphone*
16 *Termination Fee Cases*, 186 Cal. App. 4th 1380, 1393 (2010) (same). The Ninth
17 Circuit recognizes that service awards “are intended to compensate class
18 representatives for work done on behalf of the class, to make up for financial or
19 reputational risk undertaken in bringing the action, and, sometimes, to recognize
20 their willingness to act as a private attorney general.” *Rodriguez*, 563 F.3d at
21 958-59. Service awards are committed to the sound discretion of the trial court
22 and should be awarded based upon the court’s consideration of criteria including
23 the amount of time and effort spent on the litigation, the duration of the
24 litigation, and the degree of personal gain obtained as a result of the litigation.
25 *See Van Vranken v. Atl. Richfield Co.*, 901 F. Supp. 294, 299 (N.D. Cal. 1995);
26 *accord Wilson v. Airborne, Inc.*, No. 07-cv-00770, 2008 U.S. Dist. LEXIS
27 110411, at *36-37 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 13, 2008).

28

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1 Here, Plaintiffs respectfully request that the Court approve a modest
2 service award of \$2,500 for each of the Class Representatives in recognition of
3 their contributions toward the successful prosecution of this case. They all served
4 the Class well. They reviewed relevant pleadings and kept in constant
5 communication with their counsel throughout the Litigation. They provided
6 information for their disclosures and all documents in their possession (including
7 evidence of their rusted frames) and were willing to provide deposition testimony
8 and to testify at trial if needed. *See* Blood Prelim. Decl., ¶57. Toyota does not
9 oppose the payment of these service awards. SA, §VIII.C.

10 The requested service awards fall below amounts awarded in comparable
11 cases. *See, e.g., In re Mego Fin. Corp. Sec. Litig.*, 213 F.3d 454, 463 (9th Cir.
12 2000) (approving \$5,000 incentive awards); *In re Toys “R” Us-Del., Inc. Fair &*
13 *Accurate Credit Transactions Act Litig.*, 295 F.R.D. 438, 470-72 (C.D. Cal.
14 2014) (approving \$5,000 incentive awards); *Dennis*, 2013 U.S. Dist. LEXIS
15 163118, at *26-27 (citing cases and stating “the amount of the incentive
16 payments requested, \$5,000, is well within if not below the range awarded in
17 similar cases”); *Williams v. Costco Wholesale Corp.*, No. 02-cv-02003, 2010
18 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 19674, at *10 (S.D. Cal. Mar. 4, 2010) (approving \$5,000
19 service award); *Garner v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, No. 08-cv-01365,
20 2010 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 49477, at *47 and n.8 (N.D. Cal. Apr. 22, 2010) (service
21 award of \$20,000 was “well justified” given plaintiffs’ efforts on behalf of the
22 class) (compiling cases); *Pelletz v. Weyerhaeuser Co.*, 592 F. Supp. 2d 1322,
23 1330 (W.D. Wash. 2009) (“When compared to service awards in other cases, the
24 \$7,500 payments requested here are justified.”).

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1 **VII. CONCLUSION**

2 For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiffs respectfully request that the Court
3 award Plaintiffs' Counsel \$9.75 million in attorneys' fees and \$117,500 in
4 expenses, and that the Court award the Class Representatives \$2,500 each in
5 service awards.

6 Respectfully submitted,
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on February 27, 2017, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the e-mail addresses denoted on the Electronic Mail Notice List, and I hereby certify that I have mailed the foregoing document or paper via the United States Postal Service to the non-CM/ECF participants indicated on the Electronic Mail Notice List.

I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on February 27, 2017.

s/ Timothy G. Blood

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