

CLASS ACTION FILED AGAINST PETLAND, INC.

COLUMBUS, OHIO: The New York law firms of Giskan Solotaroff Anderson & Stewart LLP and Hartman & Craven LLP, along with the Columbus law firm of Luper Neidenthal & Logan, L.P.A., have filed a class action lawsuit in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio against Petland, Inc., and others, on behalf of Petland franchisees who purchased Petland franchises from November 26, 1993, until the present.

The lawsuit, which arises out of the alleged unlawful business scheme of Petland and its affiliated vendors, alleges that Petland defrauded franchisees in selling to them what Petland calls its “System.” According to Petland, so long as franchisees follow its “System,” they will be successful, by virtue of, among other things, Petland’s proprietary computer hardware and software, and Petland’s syndicate of approved vendors.

“The problem with the System,” says Darnley D. Stewart of Giskan Solotaroff Anderson & Stewart LLP, one of the attorneys for the plaintiffs, “is that it works in only one direction -- for the benefit of Petland and its vendors.” Columbus Attorney Greg Melick of Luper Neidenthal & Logan, concurs: “The “System” is broken and Petland franchisees are set up to fail from the beginning.” Mr. Melick has previously filed two individual lawsuits on behalf of Petland franchisees in Ohio and Indiana.

The complaint alleges that the plaintiffs, Veronica Jones and Robert Hyde, and other members of the class, were fraudulently induced into purchasing failing Petland franchises for hundreds of thousands of dollars per franchise when Petland knew, or should have known, that the franchises could not succeed. The franchisees further charge that they were duped into spending hundreds of thousands more on animals and merchandise from Petland’s network of “approved vendors,” when those vendors’ animals were often sick or dying, and their

merchandise overpriced. The action seeks compensation for affected Petland franchisees, as well as rescission of their franchise agreements with Petland.

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