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18 *Company*

19 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
20 **NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**  
21 **SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION**

22 MENOMINEE INDIAN TRIBE OF  
23 WISCONSIN, MENOMINEE INDIAN  
24 GAMING AUTHORITY d/b/a MENOMINEE  
25 CASINO RESORT, and WOLF RIVER  
26 DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, individually  
27 and on behalf of all others similarly situated,

28 Plaintiffs,

v.

- (1) LEXINGTON INSURANCE COMPANY;
- (2) UNDERWRITERS AT LLOYD'S – SYNDICATES: ASC 1414, XLC 2003, TAL 1183, MSP 318, ATL1861, KLN 510, AGR 3268;
- (3) UNDERWRITERS AT LLOYD'S – SYNDICATE: CNP 4444;
- (4) UNDERWRITERS AT LLOYD'S – ASPEN SPECIALTY INSURANCE COMPANY;
- (5) UNDERWRITERS AT LLOYD'S – SYNDICATES: KLN 0510, ATL 1861, ASC 1414, QBE 1886, MSP 0318, APL 1969, CHN 2015;
- (6) UNDERWRITERS AT LLOYD'S – SYNDICATE: BRT 2987;

CASE NO. 3:21-cv-00231-WHO

**DEFENDANT LANDMARK AMERICAN INSURANCE COMPANY'S NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION TO DISMISS; JOINDER IN DEFENDANT LEXINGTON INSURANCE COMPANY'S MOTION TO DISMISS PLAINTIFFS' AMENDED CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT**

Date: June 16, 2021  
Time: 2:00 p.m.  
Judge: Hon. William H. Orrick  
Courtroom: 2

- 1 (7) UNDERWRITERS AT LLOYD’S –  
2 SYNDICATES: KLN 0510, TMK 1880,  
3 BRT 2987, BRT 2988, CNP 4444, ATL  
4 1861, NEON WORLDWIDE  
5 PROPERTY CONSORTIUM, AUW  
6 0609, TAL 1183, AUL 1274;
- 7 (8) HOMELAND INSURANCE  
8 COMPANY OF NEW YORK;
- 9 (9) HALLMARK SPECIALTY  
10 INSURANCE COMPANY;
- 11 (10) ENDURANCE WORLDWIDE  
12 INSURANCE LTD T/AS SOMPO  
13 INTERNATIONAL;
- 14 (11) ARCH SPECIALTY INSURANCE  
15 COMPANY;
- 16 (12) EVANSTON INSURANCE COMPANY;
- 17 (13) ALLIED WORLD NATIONAL  
18 ASSURANCE COMPANY;
- 19 (14) LIBERTY MUTUAL FIRE  
20 INSURANCE COMPANY;
- 21 (15) LANDMARK AMERICAN  
22 INSURANCE COMPANY;
- 23 (16) XL CATLIN INSURANCE COMPANY  
24 UK LTD; and
- 25 (17) SRU DOE INSURERS 1-20,

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Defendants.

**NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION**

TO THE COURT AND TO ALL PARTIES AND THEIR COUNSEL OF RECORD:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on Wednesday, June 16, 2021, at 2:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in the courtroom of the Honorable William H. Orrick, United States District Judge, Northern District of California, located at 450 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102-3489, in Courtroom 2 on the 17th Floor, or by remote conferencing as directed by the Court, Defendant Landmark American Insurance Company (“Landmark”) will and hereby does move the Court pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) for an Order dismissing the Amended Class Action Complaint brought by Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Menominee Indian Gaming Authority d/b/a Menominee Casino Resort, and Wolf River Development Company (collectively, “Plaintiffs”), with prejudice.

First, Landmark joins in the arguments set forth in Defendant Lexington Insurance Company’s Motion to Dismiss Plaintiffs’ Amended Class Action Complaint. The arguments stated there are applicable to Landmark.

Second, Landmark moves for dismissal of Plaintiffs’ claims because, even if Plaintiffs had alleged direct physical loss or damage to property, Landmark’s Pathogen Exclusion absolutely bars Plaintiffs’ claims.

The Motion to Dismiss is based upon this Notice of Motion and Motion, the following Memorandum of Points and Authorities, Defendant Lexington’s Motion to Dismiss and Memorandum of Points and Authorities and the arguments contained therein, the Declaration of Qianwei Fu and attached exhibits, the reply papers filed in support of these motions, oral argument of counsel at the hearing, the files and records in this action, and such other and further evidence or arguments as the Court may allow.

**MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES****I. INTRODUCTION**

Landmark adopts and incorporates by reference the factual background, arguments, authorities, and exhibits attached thereto, set forth in Lexington's Motion in their entirety. Specifically, the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin and two of its commercial entities' (collectively, "Plaintiffs") claims and causes of action against Landmark should be dismissed because Plaintiffs have failed to allege the necessary physical loss or damage to property required to trigger coverage under the Landmark Policies.

In addition to the reasons detailed in Lexington's Motion, Landmark also moves for dismissal of Plaintiffs' claims and causes of action on additional grounds: Plaintiffs' losses arising from COVID-19 and related civil authority orders are barred by the Landmark Policies' Pathogen Exclusion, which plainly and unambiguously precludes coverage for any loss or damage caused directly or indirectly by the discharge, dispersal, seepage, migration, release, escape or application of any pathogenic or poisonous biological or chemical materials. The Pathogen Exclusion applies regardless of any other cause or event that contributes concurrently or in any sequence to the loss. Because Plaintiffs fail to otherwise state plausible claims for relief, their claims against Landmark should be dismissed with prejudice.

**II. THE LANDMARK POLICIES**

Landmark issued policy number LHQ424638 to Plaintiffs for the July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2020 policy period (the "Landmark DIC Policy"). The Landmark DIC Policy provides \$50,000,000 coverage in the \$100,000,000 excess \$100,000,000 "DIC only Layer including EQ and FL." Declaration of Qianwei Fu in Support of Landmark's Motion to Dismiss ("Fu Decl."), Ex. A at 16. The Landmark DIC Policy was intended to provide coverage only for earthquake and flood that was not covered in the manuscript primary and excess lower layers. Landmark also issued policy number LHT424650 for the July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2020 policy period (the "Landmark Limited Excess Policy"). The Landmark Limited Excess Policy only identifies and covers the following named insureds: Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians, Cherokee Nation Entertainment, LLC, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Chickasaw Nation Department of Commerce, and Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Fu Decl., Ex. B at 9. The

1 Landmark Limited Excess Policy does not name Plaintiffs as Named Insureds. (The Landmark DIC  
2 Policy and the Landmark Limited Excess Policy are collectively referred to as the “Landmark  
3 Policies”).

4 Nevertheless, the Landmark Policies contain all of the terms and conditions detailed in  
5 Lexington’s Motion to Dismiss. In addition, the Landmark Policies contain a Pathogenic or Poisonous  
6 Biological or Chemical Materials Endorsement that bars coverage for losses resulting from any  
7 pathogenic materials and which applies to preclude the claims sought here (the “Landmark Pathogen  
8 Exclusion”). The Landmark Pathogen Exclusion states:

9 **EXCLUSION OF PATHOGENIC OR POISONOUS  
10 BIOLOGICAL OR CHEMICAL MATERIALS**

11 \* \* \*

12 We will not pay for loss or damage caused directly or indirectly by the  
13 discharge, dispersal, seepage, migration, release, escape or application  
of any pathogenic or poisonous biological or chemical materials. Such  
loss or damage is excluded regardless of any other cause or event that  
contributes concurrently or in any sequence to the loss.

14 Fu Decl., Ex. A at 94 and Ex. B. at 92.

15 **III. LEGAL STANDARD**

16 A motion to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6) challenges the legal sufficiency of the claims stated  
17 in the complaint. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6). To survive a motion to dismiss, the plaintiffs’ complaint  
18 “must contain sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to ‘state a claim to relief that is plausible on  
19 its face.’” *10E, LLC v. Travelers Indem. Co. of Connecticut*, No. 2:20-CV-04418-SVW-AS, 2020 WL  
20 6749361, at \*1 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 13, 2020) (quoting *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009) and  
21 *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)). Although “a court must take all allegations  
22 of material fact as true and construe them in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party,” *Turner*  
23 *v. City & Cty. of San Francisco*, 788 F.3d 1206, 1210 (9th Cir. 2015), a complaint’s factual allegations  
24 must “raise a right to relief above the speculative level,” *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555. A complaint that  
25 offers “labels and conclusions” or a “formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not  
26 do.” *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678. “Nor does a complaint suffice if it tenders ‘naked assertion[s]’ devoid of  
27 ‘further factual enhancement.’” *Id.* (citation omitted; alteration in original). Dismissal with prejudice  
28

1 is warranted when “the complaint [can]not be saved by any amendment.” *Moss v. U.S. Secret Serv.*,  
2 572 F.3d 962, 972 (9th Cir. 2009).

3 Under Wisconsin law, the court is to give effect to the intent of the parties and should construe  
4 “the policy’s language according to its plain and ordinary meaning, as understood by a reasonable  
5 person in the position of the insured.” *Phillips v. Parmelee*, 840 N.W.2d 713, 764 (Wis. 2013). When  
6 determining whether a policy provides coverage, the court will “examine the facts of the claim and the  
7 language of the policy to determine whether the policy’s insuring agreement makes an initial grant of  
8 coverage.” *Day v. Allstate Indem. Co.*, 798 N.W.2d 199, 206 (Wis. 2011). If the claim triggers an initial  
9 grant of coverage, the court then determines whether an exclusion will preclude that coverage. *Id.* The  
10 insured has the burden to prove the initial grant of coverage, and this burden shifts to the insurer to  
11 show that an exclusion precludes the coverage. *Id.*

12 Here, there are two legal bases that preclude Plaintiffs’ claims: (1) Plaintiffs failed to allege  
13 facts to plausibly show they sustained direct physical loss or damage as required under any of the  
14 provisions pleaded and (2) the Landmark Pathogen Exclusion absolutely bars Plaintiffs’ claims.

#### 15 IV. ARGUMENT

16 The facts pleaded in Plaintiffs’ Amended Class Action Complaint (“FAC”) demonstrate as a  
17 matter of law that Plaintiffs cannot establish an entitlement to coverage under the Policy. As detailed  
18 in Lexington’s Motion to Dismiss Plaintiffs’ Amended Class Action Complaint, Plaintiffs’ claims  
19 against all Defendants, including Landmark, should be dismissed because Plaintiffs have failed to  
20 allege direct physical loss or damage to property. Accordingly, without need to consider any exclusion  
21 in the Landmark Policies, Plaintiffs’ claims should be dismissed.

22 Even if Plaintiffs had alleged direct physical loss or damage to property, the Landmark  
23 Pathogen Exclusion offers an independent basis to preclude coverage for Plaintiffs’ claims against  
24 Landmark. Notably, Plaintiffs’ Amended Class Action Complaint discusses several potential  
25 exclusions in the primary policy form, but does not address, and in fact ignores, Landmark’s Policy  
26 form and its directly relevant exclusion. *See, e.g.*, Plaintiffs’ Amended Class Action Complaint  
27 (“FAC”) at ¶¶ 56 – 58.

1 The Landmark Pathogen Exclusion excludes coverage for “loss or damage caused directly or  
2 indirectly by the discharge, dispersal, seepage, migration, release, escape or application of any  
3 pathogenic or poisonous biological or chemical materials.” Fu Decl., Ex. A at 94; Fu Decl., Ex. B. at  
4 92. The exclusion further applies “regardless of any other cause or event that contributes concurrently  
5 or in any sequence to the loss.” *Id.*

6 While there are no cases in Wisconsin defining the terms “pathogenic materials”,<sup>1</sup> the dictionary  
7 defines the term “pathogenic” as “causing of capable of causing disease.”<sup>2</sup> And the term “material” is  
8 defined as a noun that is “1(a)(1) the elements, constituents, or substances of which something is  
9 composed or can be made; (2): matter that has qualities which give it individuality and by which it may  
10 be categorized.”<sup>3</sup> Further, courts addressing COVID-19-related issues routinely recognize and refer to  
11 the virus as a pathogen.<sup>4</sup>

12 Plaintiffs’ Complaint contains multiple admissions that its losses were caused by the virus that  
13 causes COVID-19. For example, Plaintiffs allege:

- 14 • “Due to COVID-19, the Clinic also has suffered direct physical loss or damage and as a  
15 result, the Clinic’s ability to provide services has been severely hampered, causing a  
16 significant drop in business and tax revenue.” (Plaintiffs’ FAC at p. 3, ¶7).
- 17 • “These businesses have also suffered direct physical loss or damage due to COVID-19,  
18 causing a loss in business and tax revenues for Plaintiffs.” (Plaintiffs’ FAC at p. 3, ¶8).

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21 <sup>1</sup> There are cases in California that recognize that pathogens include viruses, including coronaviruses,  
22 such as SARS. *See, e.g., Tri-Valley Cares v. U.S. Dep’t of Energy*, No. C 08-01372 SBA, 2009 WL  
347744, at \*7 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 9, 2009).

23 <sup>2</sup> “*Pathogenic*,” MERRIAM WEBSTER, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pathogenic> (last  
visited Feb. 11, 2021).

24 <sup>3</sup> “*Material*,” MERRIAM WEBSTER, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/materials> (last  
25 visited Feb. 11, 2021). In Wisconsin, “a court may find guidance in construing the common  
26 meaning of an insurance policy term by looking to a definition of the term in a recognized  
dictionary.” *Weimer v. Country Mut. Ins. Co.*, 216 Wis.2d 705, 722–23, 575 N.W.2d 466 (1998).

27 <sup>4</sup> *See, e.g., Basank v. Decker*, 449 F. Supp. 3d 205, 216 (S.D.N.Y. 2020) (recognizing that SARS-  
28 CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, is a highly transmissible “infectious pathogen”); *In re Approval  
of the Judicial Emergency Declared in the S. Dist. of California*, 955 F.3d 1135, 1139 (9th Cir.  
2020) (recognizing that the State of California had a right to try to reduce aerosol transmissible  
*pathogens*, including COVID-19).

- 1 • “Due to COVID-19, Plaintiffs have suffered “direct physical loss or damage” to MCR,  
2 Thunderbird, the Clinic, and other businesses. COVID-19 damaged the property of MCR,  
3 Thunderbird and the Clinic, making each of them unusable in the way that they had been  
4 used before COVID-19 and effectively uninhabitable for patrons. Instead of being able to  
5 fill MCR and Thunderbird with guests, gamblers, meeting attendees, and diners, MCR and  
6 Thunderbird were required by the presence of the virus and by resulting civil authority  
7 orders to drastically reduce operations, and even to close entirely. To do anything else would  
8 have threatened further damage to the property at MCR and Thunderbird as well as further  
9 losses for Plaintiffs. Until COVID-19 was brought under control, these properties were  
10 damaged and faced the threat of further damage. Use of the properties was not possible.”  
11 (Plaintiffs’ FAC at p. 4, ¶13).
- 12 • “This loss is physical. Due to physical damage caused by the presence of the coronavirus,  
13 the interior spaces of MCR, Thunderbird, and the Clinic were effectively uninhabitable, or  
14 would have become so imminently, and Plaintiffs were unable to permit their customers to  
15 access their interior spaces, severely impacting their business. The physical presence of the  
16 coronavirus, the resulting damage to property, and the probability of consequential illness  
17 for any patron rendered the space effectively uninhabitable in the same way that a crumbling  
18 and open roof from the aftermath of a tornado would make the interior space of a business  
19 unusable.” (Plaintiffs’ FAC at p. 5, ¶16).
- 20 • “Due to the physical damage caused by the presence of COVID-19, these properties have  
21 become effectively or imminently uninhabitable by patrons and unsafe for their intended  
22 purpose and thus suffered physical loss or damage...If they were to conduct business as  
23 usual, the disease and virus would continue to appear, property would suffer further damage,  
24 and guests, gamblers, meeting attendees, diners, patients, and others would get sick.”  
25 (Plaintiffs’ FAC at p. 15, ¶66).
- 26 • “The presence of virus or disease has resulted in physical damage to property in that manner  
27 in this case and in addition has infested the air or imminently threatens to infest the air in  
28 the properties.” (Plaintiffs’ FAC at p. 16, ¶68).



1 These allegations all demonstrate Plaintiffs’ claimed loss was directly or indirectly caused by a virus,  
2 which is a pathogen.

3 Wisconsin courts enforce “exclusions that are clear from the face of the policy.” *Day*, 798  
4 N.W.2d at 206. In fact, the Wisconsin Supreme Court recognized in *Day* that an insurance policy must  
5 be construed in a manner “so as to give a reasonable meaning to each provision of the contract, and [ ]  
6 courts must avoid a construction which renders portions of a contract meaningless, inexplicable or mere  
7 surplusage.” *Id.* (citing *1325 North Van Buren, LLC v. T-3 Group, Ltd.*, 716 N.W.2d 822, 838 (Wis.  
8 2016)). Accordingly, Landmark’s Pathogen Exclusion must be interpreted and enforced according to  
9 its plain terms.

10 Here, the Landmark Pathogen Exclusion’s plain and unambiguous language excludes Plaintiffs’  
11 claims for coverage resulting from a virus-induced loss, COVID-19: “We will not pay for loss or  
12 damage caused directly or indirectly by the discharge, dispersal, seepage, migration, release, escape or  
13 application of any pathogenic or poisonous biological or chemical materials.” Fu Decl., Ex. A at 94;  
14 Fu Decl., Ex. B. at 92. Moreover, the Landmark Pathogen Exclusion applies “regardless of any other  
15 cause or event that contributes concurrently or in any sequence to the loss.” *Id.*

16 In fact, other courts throughout the country have consistently held that the same or similar virus  
17 exclusion precludes business interruption and civil authority claims arising out of COVID-19 and have  
18 dismissed these claims accordingly. For example, in *Boxed Foods Co., LLC v. California Capital Ins.*  
19 *Co.*, No. 20-CV-04571-CRB, 2020 WL 6271021, at \*3 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 26, 2020), *as amended* (Oct.  
20 27, 2020), this Court held that an exclusion for “loss or damage caused by, resulting from, contributing  
21 to or made worse by the actual, alleged or threatened presence of any pathogenic organism,” precluded  
22 plaintiffs’ claims arising from COVID-19 for business income losses and extra expenses under the  
23 Civil Authority provision of the policy.

24 Courts addressing similar virus exclusions have overwhelmingly dismissed business  
25 interruption and civil authority claims related to COVID-19.<sup>5</sup>

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27  
28 <sup>5</sup> See *Part Two LLC v. Owners Ins. Co.*, No. 7:20-cv-01047-LSC, 2021 WL 135319, at \*4 (N.D. Ala.  
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1 Because the Landmark Pathogen Exclusion is clear and unambiguous and applies to all  
 2 coverages in the Landmark Policies, Plaintiffs are not entitled to coverage for losses caused directly or  
 3 indirectly by a virus under any of the coverage provisions as alleged in the Complaint. Therefore,  
 4 Plaintiffs' claims against Landmark should be dismissed.

## 5 V. CONCLUSION

6 For all of the foregoing reasons, and those incorporated by reference from Lexington's Motion  
 7 to Dismiss and Memorandum of Points and Authorities In Support Thereof, this Court should GRANT  
 8 this motion and dismiss with prejudice the claims against Defendant Landmark American Insurance  
 9 Company and GRANT such other relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

10  
 11 DATED: April 9, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

12 By: /s/ Qianwei Fu

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

The undersigned hereby certifies that a true and correct copy of the foregoing document has been served on April 9, 2021, to all counsel of record who are deemed to have consented to electronic service via the Court’s CM/ECF system, and on the following parties via email:

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I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed at Fremont, California on April 9, 2021.

/s/ Qianwei Fu  
Qianwei Fu