

**DOCKETED**

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## SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND RELEASE

This Settlement Agreement and Release (Agreement) is entered into between the California Energy Commission (Energy Commission), with its principal office at 1516 Ninth Street, Sacramento, California 95814, and Harbor Freight Tools USA, Incorporated (HFT), with a place of business at 3491 Mission Oaks Boulevard, Camarillo, California 93012, collectively referred to as the Parties.

### I. RECITALS

(1) The Energy Commission's Appliance Efficiency Regulations at California Code of Regulations, Title 20, Article 4, sections 1601-1609 (Appliance Efficiency Regulations),<sup>1</sup> set forth the requirements to sell or offer for sale regulated appliances in California. The pertinent requirements include:

- Testing: The appliance is tested as required in 1603, using the applicable test method set forth in section 1604.
- Efficiency: The appliance meets the required efficiency standards set forth in sections 1605.2 or 1605.3.
- Marking: The appliance is correctly marked and labeled as required under section 1607.
- Certification: The appliance is certified to the Energy Commission and appears in the Energy Commission's most recent Modernized Appliance Efficiency Database System (MAEDbS) as required under section 1606.

(2) The Energy Commission's enforcement authority includes the removal of non-complying appliances from MAEDbS, as set forth in section 1608, and the issuance of administrative civil penalties under section 1609.

(3) HFT sells or offers for sale several models of CenTech, Drill Master, Chicago Electric, Thunderbolt Magnum, and Viking brand power tools, power banks, and battery chargers in California, either directly or through retailers or distributors.

(4) HFT power tools, power banks, and battery chargers contain small battery charging systems (SBCS) that are subject to the testing, efficiency, marking, and certification requirements for this appliance class as described in paragraph I(1) above.

(5) From February 2013 to September 2017, HFT sold or offered for sale through retailers or distributors power tools, power banks, and battery chargers in California, that were not listed in MAEDbS as required in section 1606, did not meet the SBCS efficiency standards set forth in section 1605.3(w)(2) when tested using the appropriate test method as described in section 1604(w), or were not marked as required in section 1607(d)(10).

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<sup>1</sup> All references are to California Code of Regulations, Title 20, Article 4, unless otherwise specified.

(6) Based on the above Recitals, the Energy Commission, through adjudication, could impose penalties for each violation alleged, obtain injunctive relief to prohibit HFT from continuing to sell or offer for sale, non-compliant SBCS in California, and take any other enforcement action as allowed by law.

(7) Section 1609(b)(3) and California Public Resources Code section 25402.11(a)(2) identify the following factors the Energy Commission shall consider when determining the amount of an administrative civil penalty:

- The nature and seriousness of the violation.
- The persistence of the violation, meaning a responsible person's history of past violations of the Appliance Efficiency Regulations over the previous seven years.
- The number of violations arising from the course of conduct that is subject of the enforcement proceeding.
- The length of time over which the violation occurred.
- The willfulness of the persons responsible for the violation.
- The harm to consumers and to the state that resulted from the amount of energy wasted due to the violation.
- The number of persons responsible for the violation.
- The efforts of the persons responsible for the violation to correct the violation prior to initiation of an enforcement action by the Energy Commission.
- The cooperation, by the persons responsible for the violation, with the Energy Commission during its investigation.
- The assets, liabilities, and net worth of the persons responsible for the violation. This information will be considered to reduce the administrative civil penalty amount, should a responsible person or persons elect to provide asset, liability, and net worth documentation to the Executive Director to demonstrate that a reduction in a penalty amount is necessary to avoid an undue burden.

(8) Penalties must be set at levels sufficient to deter violations. In developing this Agreement, the Energy Commission considered the facts of the case and applied the above factors to determine an appropriate settlement. Further, in this case HFT cooperated with the Energy Commission in the investigation by redesigning their products; promptly testing, certifying, and marking the units; and by providing to the Energy Commission sales data of non-compliant units. The efforts by HFT saved the Energy Commission time and resources in investigating the violations and minimized the impacts on the competitive business environment or energy consumption and the environment in California, from the non-compliant units.

(9) HFT is willing to enter into this Agreement solely for the purpose of settlement and resolution of this matter with the Energy Commission. The Energy Commission accepts this Agreement in termination of this matter. Accordingly, the Parties agree to resolve this matter completely by means of this Agreement, without the need for adjudication.

## II. TERMS AND RELEASE

In consideration of the Recitals listed above which are incorporated into this section by reference, and the mutual agreements set forth below, the Energy Commission and HFT agree as follows:

(1) This Agreement covers the following HFT appliances: CenTech Battery Charger/Maintainer 99857, Chicago Electric Cordless Drill 68850, CenTech 3 in 1 Power Pack 62376, CenTech Chargers 60322, 60431, and 63873, Drill Master Cordless Drill 62868, Thunderbolt Magnum Chargers 62538 and 95017, and Viking Charger 63299.

(2) For selling or offering for sale in California, various products containing SBCS identified in paragraph I(5), whose model numbers are identified in paragraph II(1) that did not meet the energy efficiency standards prescribed by section 1605.3, were not certified to MAEDbS as required by section 1606, or were not marked per section 1607(d)(10), and, in consideration of the factors listed in paragraph I(7) and I(8) above, HFT shall pay as an administrative civil penalty the total sum of five hundred fifty seven thousand, six hundred thirty six dollars and thirteen cents (\$557,636.13) by wire transfer to the California Energy Commission by September 1, 2019. Banking information and instructions necessary to complete the electronic transfer shall be provided by the Energy Commission.

(3) HFT also agrees to take each of the following actions for any and all SBCS it will sell or offer for sale in California:

- a. Obtain testing of all basic models, utilizing the applicable test method, as required by the Appliance Efficiency Regulations.
- b. Certify all basic models in MAEDbS, and ensure listings are kept current and up to date.
- c. Use a new model number for any of the basic models described in II(1) that have been redesigned to meet energy efficiency standards.
- d. Add the required SBCS mark to the unit, cover page of the instructions, and exterior product package.

(4) This Agreement shall apply to and be binding upon HFT and its principals, officers, directors, receivers, trustees, employees, successors and assignees, subsidiary and parent corporations, and upon the Energy Commission and any successor agency that may have responsibility for and jurisdiction over the subject matter of this Agreement.

(5) In consideration of the payment specified above, the Energy Commission hereby releases HFT and its parent corporation, principals, directors, officers, agents, employees, shareholders, subsidiaries, predecessors and successors from any and all claims for violations of section 1608 (efficiency, marking, certification), relating to the appliances identified in paragraph I(5), whose model numbers are identified in paragraph II(1).

(6) This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding between the Energy Commission and HFT concerning the claims and settlement in this Agreement, and this Agreement fully supersedes and replaces any and all prior negotiations and agreement of any kind or nature, whether written or oral, between the Energy Commission and HFT concerning these claims.

(7) No agreement to modify, amend, extend, supersede, terminate, or discharge this Agreement, or any portion thereof, shall be valid or enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by all Parties to this Agreement.

(8) HFT further agrees that if the subject matter of this Agreement comes before the Energy Commission in an administrative adjudication, neither any member of the Energy Commission, nor the Executive Director, shall be disqualified because of prior consideration of this Agreement.

(9) Each Party to this Agreement has reviewed the Agreement independently, has had the opportunity to consult counsel, is fully informed of the terms and effect of this Agreement, and has not relied in any way on any inducement, representation, or advice of any other Party in deciding to enter into this Agreement.

(10) This Agreement shall be interpreted and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of California, without regard to California's choice of law rules. Any litigation arising out of or related to this Agreement shall be filed in the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento.

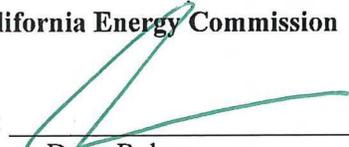
(11) Each provision of this Agreement is severable, and in the event that any provision of this Agreement is held to be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Agreement remains in full force and effect.

(12) The failure of any Party to enforce any provision of this Agreement shall not be construed as a waiver of any such provision, nor prevent such Party thereafter from enforcing such provision or any other provision of this Agreement.

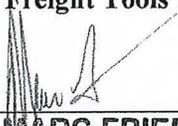
(13) This Agreement is deemed to have been drafted equally by the Parties; it will not be interpreted for or against either Party on the ground that said Party drafted it.

(14) This Agreement is effective upon signature by a representative of HFT with authority to bind the company, and signature by the Executive Director of the Energy Commission. The Parties agree that fax or scanned signatures and multiple signature pages are acceptable for purposes of executing this Agreement, which may be signed in counterparts.

**California Energy Commission**

By:   
Name: Drew Bohan  
Title: Executive Director  
Date: 7-26-19

**Harbor Freight Tools USA, Inc.**

By:   
Name: **MARC FRIEDMAN**  
Title: GENERAL COUNSEL  
Date: 7/19/19