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NEWS RELEASE

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Dec. 7, 2018

District Attorneys Reach Settlement with Amazon to Prohibit Force-Fed Foie Gras Sales in California

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey announced today that Amazon.com Inc. has agreed not to sell force-fed foie gras in California under a consumer protection settlement reached with her office and the Monterey County and Santa Clara County district attorney's offices.

The settlement was based on allegations of unlawful sales in California of foie gras on Amazon's website. In the stipulated judgment, Amazon also agreed to pay \$100,000 in civil penalties, investigative costs and restitution to a state trust fund used to enforce consumer protection laws.

Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge James L. Stoelker approved the settlement in case 18CV338822 yesterday. Deputy District Attorney Steven Wang of the Consumer Protection Division represented the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office in the case.

In 2004, former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law Health and Safety Code section 25982, which banned the sale in California of foie gras ("fat liver" from duck or goose liver that can also be made into a mousse or pate) produced by "force feeding a bird for the purpose of enlarging the bird's liver beyond normal size," effective July 1, 2012. California also banned the production of foie gras via such force-feeding in California.

These laws were enacted because of the cruelty suffered by birds that are force-fed to make foie gras. In addition to the pain caused by having metal pipes forced down their throats, force-feeding damages the livers of the birds so badly it induces an extremely painful disease known as hepatic lipidosis.

Upon contact from prosecutors regarding sales of foie gras to consumers in California, Amazon took immediate steps to stop such sales. As the parties were in negotiations, in January 2015 a federal district court ruled in a lawsuit filed by the foie gras industry against the California attorney general that the state's law was preempted by the federal Poultry Products Inspection Act.

This decision was overturned on appeal by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in September 2017. During the long pendency of the appeal, Amazon continued to block sales of foie gras in California. The foie gras industry plaintiffs appealed the Ninth Circuit's decision to the U.S. Supreme Court and obtained a stay on the Ninth Circuit's mandate to the lower federal court.

The Supreme Court's decision on whether to review it is still pending.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.