

1 BIRD, MARELLA, RHOW,
LINCENBERG, DROOKS & NESSIM, LLP
2 John V. Berlinski (State Bar No. 208537)
jberlinski@birdmarella.com
3 Julia B. Cherlow (State Bar No. 290538)
jcherlow@birdmarella.com
4 1875 Century Park East, 23rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90067-2561
5 Telephone: (310) 201-2100
Facsimile: (310) 201-2110
6

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David W. Slayton,
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7 WACHTELL, LIPTON, ROSEN & KATZ
Jonathan M. Moses (admitted *pro hac vice*)
Adam L. Goodman (admitted *pro hac vice*)
8 51 West 52nd Street
New York, NY 10019
9 Telephone: (212) 403-1000
Facsimile: (212) 403-2000
10

Attorneys for Plaintiffs and Cross-Defendants
11 *William B. Pitt and Mondo Bongo, LLC*
12

13 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CENTRAL DISTRICT
14

15 WILLIAM B. PITT, an individual; and
MONDO BONGO, LLC, a California limited
16 liability company,
17 Plaintiffs,
18 vs.
19 ANGELINA JOLIE, et al.,
20 Defendants.

CASE NO. 22STCV06081

**PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE RE
ALTERNATIVE WRIT OF MANDATE**

Judges: Hon. Lia Martin
Hon. Cindy Pánuco
Dept.: 3
Action Filed: February 17, 2022
Trial Date: February 1, 2027

21 AND RELATED CROSS-ACTIONS
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1 Plaintiffs and Cross-Defendants William B. Pitt and Mondo Bongo, LLC (collectively
2 “Plaintiffs”) respectfully submit this response to the Honorable Judge Lia Martin’s March 4, 2026
3 Court Order re. Alternative Writ of Mandate (the “Court Order”), in which Judge Martin stated
4 that the Court “is considering complying with option (a) of the Alternative Writ” of Mandate
5 issued by the Court of Appeal and invited briefing on the sole issue of “whether the court should
6 vacate its December 17th, 2025 Order and issue a new order finding that Jolie has met her initial
7 burden of establishing facts necessary to support a *prima facie* claim of attorney-client privilege
8 and setting the matter for hearing pursuant to *Costco Wholesale Corp v. Superior Court* (2009) 47
9 Cal.4th 725, 733” or should instead proceed with option (b) presented in the Alternative Writ of
10 Mandate.

11 Given the Alternative Writ, Plaintiffs do not oppose the Court selecting option
12 (a) *i.e.*, Judge Martin vacating her December 17, 2025 Order, issuing a new order making the
13 threshold determination that Defendant and Cross-Complainant Angelina Jolie (“Jolie”) has met
14 her *initial* burden of establishing facts sufficient to support a *prima facie* claim of attorney-client
15 privilege as to the 22 documents at issue, and setting the matter for hearing pursuant to *Costco*
16 before Judge Pánuco.

17 As both the Alternative Writ and the Court Order recognize, however, the *prima facie*
18 showing represents only the *first* step of the analysis. Under *Costco*, once the party asserting
19 privilege establishes facts sufficient to support a *prima facie* claim, the burden shifts to the
20 opposing party to demonstrate at the second step of the analysis that the communication was not
21 confidential or the privilege otherwise does not apply. *See* 47 Cal.4th at 733, 743 (“[T]he
22 privilege is not applicable when the attorney acts merely as a negotiator for the client or is
23 providing business advice.” (quoting *Aetna Casualty & Surety Co. v. Superior Court*, 153
24 Cal.App.3d 467, 475 (1984))); *see also id.* at 744 (George, C.J., concurring) (“Sometimes [] the
25 dominant purpose of the communication will be a critical consideration. As discussed,
26 communications between persons who stand in an attorney-client relationship are not privileged in
27 every instance, because it sometimes occurs that an attorney-client relationship exists, but that the
28 attorney also acts in another capacity for the client, as, for example, the client’s agent in a business

1 transaction.”).

2 With respect to scheduling a hearing to determine whether Plaintiffs have met their burden
3 under *Costco* as would be required under option (a) of the Alternative Writ, Plaintiffs understood
4 from the March 4, 2026 proceedings before Judge Pánuco that April 17, 2026, was set as a Case
5 Management Conference (Re: Appeal), to discuss such scheduling and any related briefing. *See*
6 **Exhibit A**. Accordingly, Plaintiffs respectfully request that the April 17, 2026 appearance
7 proceed as ordered by Judge Pánuco for that purpose, rather than setting that date for the *Costco*
8 hearing itself. Proceeding in this manner will allow the parties to present the matter as directed by
9 Judge Pánuco.

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11 DATED: March 11, 2026

12

By: /s/ John V. Berlinski

John V. Berlinski

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BIRD, MARELLA, RHOW,
LINCENBERG, DROOKS & NESSIM, LLP
John V. Berlinski (State Bar No. 208537)
Julia B. Cherlow (State Bar No. 290538)

14

15

16

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17

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Attorneys for Plaintiffs and Cross-Defendants
William B. Pitt and Mondo Bongo, LLC

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EXHIBIT A

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 3

22STCV06081

WILLIAM B. PITT, et al. vs ANGELINA JOLIE, et al.

March 4, 2026

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Cindy Pánuco
Judicial Assistant: Pedro Martinez
Courtroom Assistant: Veronica Ponce

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

APPEARANCES:

For Plaintiff(s): John Vincent Berlinski; Adam L. Goodman Via LACourtConnect; Jessica L. Layden Via LACourtConnect -- See additional appearances below.

For Defendant(s): Julia B. Cherlow; Daniel Nathan Csillag; Paul David Murphy -- See additional appearances below.

NATURE OF PROCEEDINGS: Case Management Conference (Re: Appeal)

The matter is called for hearing.

Court and counsel discuss the status of the case.

The court informs the parties that Judge Lia Martin will review the decision from the Court of Appeal and issue a ruling.

On the Court's own motion, the Case Management Conference (Re: Appeal) scheduled for 03/04/2026 is continued to 04/17/2026 at 10:30 AM in Department 3 at Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

The court takes note that the Plaintiff filed a Complex Civil Case Questionnaire. Assistant Supervising Judge of Complex Civil Litigation, Judge Samantha Jessner deemed the case non-complex.

Parties are to meet and confer and stipulate to a case management plan in light of five-year rule prior to 4/3/2026.

On the Court's own motion, the Hearing on Motion to be Relieved as Counsel scheduled for 04/27/2026 is advanced to this date and continued to 04/03/2026 at 01:30 PM in Department 3 at Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

On the Court's own motion, the Hearing on Motion to be Relieved as Counsel scheduled for 04/27/2026 is advanced to this date and continued to 04/03/2026 at 01:30 PM in Department 3 at Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 3

22STCV06081

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Judge: Honorable Cindy Pánuco

Judicial Assistant: Pedro Martinez

Courtroom Assistant: Veronica Ponce

CSR: None

ERM: None

Deputy Sheriff: None

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On the Court's own motion, the Hearing on Motion to be Relieved as Counsel scheduled for 04/27/2026 is continued to 04/03/2026 at 01:30 PM in Department 3 at Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

Status Conference is scheduled for 04/03/2026 at 01:30 PM in Department 3 at Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

Parties are to file a Joint Status report five (5) court days prior to the hearing set for 4/3/2026.

Moving party on the motions to be relieved is to give notice.

Additional appearance for Plaintiff(s):

Jonathan M. Moses Via LACourtConnect

Additional appearance for Defendant(s):

Joedat Hani Tuffaha Via LACourtConnect

SERVICE LIST
Pitt v. Jolie
Case No. 22STCV06081

1
2
3 Paul D. Murphy
Daniel N. Csillag
4 MURPHY ROSEN LLP
100 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1300
5 Santa Monica, CA 90401
Telephone: (310) 899-3300
6 Email: pmurphy@murphyrosen.com
Email: dcsillag@murphyrosen.com
7 **Counsel for Defendant and Cross-
Complainant Angelina Jolie**

Laura W. Brill
Daniel Barlava
Matthew Bernstein
KENDALL BRILL & KELLY LLP
10100 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 1725
Los Angeles, CA 90067-4013
Telephone: (310) 556-2700
Email: lbrill@kbfkfirm.com
Email: dbarlava@kbfkfirm.com
Email: mbernstein@kbfkfirm.com
**Counsel appearing specially to challenge
jurisdiction on behalf of Cross-Defendants
Roland Venturini and Gary Bradbury**

8
9
10 Joe Tuffaha
Prashanth Chennakesavan
11 TUFFAHA CHENNAKESAVAN
MANDLEKAR LLP
12 515 S. Flower Street, 18th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071
13 Telephone: (213) 449-5230
Email: jtuffaha@tc-llp.com
14 Email: pchennakesavan@tc-llp.com
15 **Counsel for Defendant and Cross-
Complainant Nouvel, LLC and Defendant
Tenute del Mondo B.V., and appearing
16 specially to challenge jurisdiction on behalf
of Defendants Yuri Shefler and Alexey
17 Oliynik**

Keith R. Hummel
Justin C. Clarke
Jonathan Mooney
CRAVATH, SWAINE & MOORE LLP
Worldwide Plaza
825 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10019
Telephone: (212) 474-1000
Email: khummel@cravath.com
Email: jcclarke@cravath.com
Email: jmooney@cravath.com
**Counsel for Defendant and Cross-
Complainant Nouvel, LLC and Defendant
Tenute del Mondo B.V., and specially
18 appearing to challenge jurisdiction on behalf
of Defendants Yuri Shefler and Alexey
19 Oliynik**

20 Mark Dooks
Debbie Throckmorton
Assistant to Mark Dooks
21 BIRD, MARELLA, RHOW, LINCENBERG,
DROOKS & NESSIM, LLP
1875 Century Park East, 23rd Floor
22 Los Angeles, CA 90067-2561
Telephone: 310 201-2100
23 Email: mdooks@birdmarella.com
Email: dthrockmorton@birdmarella.com
24 **Counsel appearing specially to challenge
jurisdiction on behalf of Cross-Defendants
25 Marc-Olivier Perrin, SAS Miraval Provence,
and Familles Perrin**

S. Gale Dick
Randall Bryer
COHEN & GRESSER LLP
800 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
Telephone: (212) 707-7263
Email: SGDick@CohenGresser.com
Email: rbryer@cohengresser.com
**Counsel appearing specially to challenge
jurisdiction on behalf of Cross-Defendants
26 Marc-Olivier Perrin, SAS Miraval Provence,
and Families Perrin**