

1 MARY E. ALEXANDER, ESQ. (SBN: 104173)
2 BRENDAN D.S. WAY, ESQ. (SBN: 261705)
3 Mary Alexander & Associates, P.C.
4 44 Montgomery Street, Suite 1303
5 San Francisco, California 94104
6 Telephone: (415) 433-4440
7 Facsimile: (415) 433-5440

8 ELIZABETH J. CABRASER (SBN: 083151)
9 JONATHAN D. SELBIN (SBN: 170222)
10 MARK P. CHALOS (*Admitted Pro Hac Vice*)
11 Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, LLP
12 275 Battery Street, 29th Floor
13 San Francisco, CA 94111-3339
14 Telephone: (415) 956-1000
15 Facsimile: (415) 956-1008

16 *Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

17 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
18 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

19 ROBERT ARCHER, et al.,
20 Plaintiffs,
21 v.
22 CARNIVAL CORPORATION, et
23 al.,
24 Defendants.

Case No. 2:20-CV-04203-RGK-SK

**PLAINTIFFS' MEMORANDUM OF
POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN
OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANTS'
MOTION TO STRIKE JURY
DEMAND**

Date: May 3, 2021
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Judge: Hon. R. Gary Klausner
Courtroom: 850
Magistrate: Hon. Steve Kim

Filed: April 12, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

The Seventh Amendment guarantees a party's right to a jury trial in common law matters. U.S. CONST. amend. VII. Where parties invoke both admiralty and non-admiralty bases for jurisdiction, the parties' jury trial rights remain inviolate so long as their claims are ones that could have been brought at common law. *Ghotra by Ghotra v. Bandila Shipping, Inc.*, 113 F.3d 1050, 1056 (9th Cir. 1997) (upholding plaintiff's jury trial rights on all claims where both admiralty jurisdiction and diversity jurisdiction are asserted). Maritime law does not expressly forbid a trial by jury. *Fitzgerald v. U. S. Lines Co.*, 374 U.S. 16, 20 (1963).

Plaintiffs filed this case as a class action after more than 2,000 passengers were exposed to COVID-19 on board the *Grand Princess* cruise, alleging negligence, gross negligence, negligent infliction of emotional distress, and intentional infliction of emotional distress. The passengers invoked the Class Action Fairness Act ("CAFA"), 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2)(A) and (C), as one basis for federal jurisdiction. CAFA provides federal subject matter jurisdiction where the proposed class claims exceed \$5,000,000 and at least one member of the Proposed Class is diverse in citizenship from at least one Defendant. *Id.* Because Plaintiffs here properly invoked federal subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to CAFA and brought common law claims, the Seventh Amendment guarantees Plaintiffs' right to a jury trial

Defendants have never challenged this court's jurisdiction under CAFA in any of their Answers (ECF No. 97 and 98), Motions to Dismiss (ECF No. 61-1 and 62-1), or Replies (ECF No. 73 and 94). In fact, Defendants' Answers, filed *after* the Court denied class certification, effectively concede that this Court has subject matter jurisdiction under CAFA. In response to Plaintiffs' allegations supporting CAFA jurisdiction, Carnival's Answer states: "Should a response be required,

1 Carnival does not contest jurisdiction in this action.” (ECF No. 98 ¶ 85). Princess
2 likewise does not contest CAFA jurisdiction in its Answer, stating: “[t]o the extent
3 any response is required, Princess admits that Plaintiffs seek damages in excess of
4 this Court’s jurisdictional limit but denies that Princess is liable for any amount in
5 controversy, and further denies that Plaintiffs sustained any damages for which
6 Princess would be responsible.” (ECF No. 97 ¶ 85). Nowhere does either contest
7 that this Court has CAFA jurisdiction over Plaintiffs’ claims.

8 Instead, in their Motion to Strike Plaintiffs’ Jury Demand, Defendants invent
9 a legal rule which has not been established by the Ninth Circuit, nor any other
10 binding authority: that because a court later denies class certification based on a
11 class-action waiver, the court’s exercise of subject matter jurisdiction under CAFA
12 is somehow void *ab initio* and the class certification ruling deprives Plaintiffs of
13 their Seventh Amendment right to a jury trial. This contention runs contrary to the
14 Ninth Circuit’s clearly established precedent that the denial of class certification
15 will not divest a district court of federal jurisdiction under CAFA. *United Steel,*
16 *Paper & Forestry, Rubber, Mfg., Energy, Allied Indus. & Serv. Workers Int’l Union*
17 *v. Shell Oil Co.*, 602 F.3d 1087 (9th Cir. 2010). Because independent federal
18 jurisdiction under CAFA remains in spite of the Court’s class certification denial,
19 Plaintiffs’ right to a jury trial survives. *Id.*

20 In any event, even if the Court only has subject matter jurisdiction here under
21 its admiralty powers, Defendants’ motion should still be denied because: (1) jury
22 trials are permitted in admiralty (*see Fitzgerald*, 374 U.S. at 20); (2) the savings-to-
23 suitors clause preserves Plaintiffs’ jury trial right (*see Lewis v. Lewis & Clark*
24 *Marine, Inc.*, 531 U.S. 438, 454–55 (2001)); and, (3) traditional public policy
25 concerns regarding a jury hearing complex admiralty matters are not present in this
26 case (*see Gyorfi v. Partrederiet Atomena*, 58 F.R.D. 112, 114 (N.D. Ohio 1973)).

27 **I. Background**

28 Plaintiffs initiated this putative class-action lawsuit on April 8, 2020,

1 bringing claims arising out of the COVID-19 outbreak on the *Grand Princess*
2 cruise ship, which set sail on February 21, 2020 from San Francisco to Hawaii.
3 Plaintiffs asserted federal subject matter jurisdiction in the Central District of
4 California both under admiralty jurisdiction, 28 U.S.C. § 1333, and the Class
5 Action Fairness Act, 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2)(A) and (C) and timely demanded a
6 trial by jury. (ECF No. 1). Plaintiffs filed their Second and Third Amended
7 Complaints pursuant to these same dual bases for federal jurisdiction and renewed
8 their jury trial demand. (ECF No. 58 and 84).

9 Defendants did not challenge these bases for subject matter jurisdiction in
10 their Answers (ECF No. 97 and 98), Motions to Dismiss (ECF No. 61-1 and 62-1),
11 or related Replies (ECF No. 73 and 94). Carnival also never raised any opposition
12 to Plaintiffs' jury demand until the present Motion; in fact, they affirmatively
13 sought relief from the "court or jury" in Affirmative Defense 14 of their Answer.
14 (ECF No. 98 at 59).

15 The Court declined to certify the class on October 20, 2020. (ECF No. 92).
16 Applying the "reasonable communicativeness test," the Court found that Plaintiffs
17 were contractually bound by the purported class action waiver contained deep in
18 fine print of Defendants' passage contract. (*Id.* at 5, 12).

19 **II. Legal Standard**

20 The Seventh Amendment provides: "In suits at common law, where the value
21 in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be
22 preserved." U.S. CONST. amend. VII. Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(a)
23 enshrines this right, stating that "[t]he right of trial by jury as declared by the
24 Seventh Amendment to the Constitution—or as provided by a federal statute—is
25 preserved to the parties *inviolable*." Fed. R. Civ. P. 38(a) (emphasis added). To
26 grant Defendants' Motion to Strike, the Court must find that there is no federal
27 right to a jury trial on some or all issues demanded by Plaintiffs. Fed. R. Civ. P. 39.
28

1 **III. Argument**

2 Neither the Seventh Amendment nor the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
3 forbids jury trials in cases brought solely under admiralty law. *Fitzgerald*, 374 U.S.
4 at 20. If a case implicates both admiralty jurisdiction and an independent, non-
5 admiralty jurisdictional basis, the party’s Seventh Amendment jury trial right
6 remains inviolate. *Trentacosta v. Frontier Pac. Aircraft Indus., Inc.*, 813 F.2d
7 1553, 1559 (9th Cir. 1987).

8 The Ninth Circuit described this rule in *Ghotra by Ghotra*, stating: “the
9 proper focus is on whether the suit could have been brought at ‘common law,’ that
10 is, whether the court had an independent basis for jurisdiction and whether this was
11 the type of claim that historically could be brought outside of admiralty court.”
12 *Ghotra* , 113 F.3d at 1055; *see also Wilmington Trust v. U.S. Dist. Ct. for Dist. of*
13 *Hawaii*, 934 F.2d 1026, 1029 (9th Cir. 1991). Because Plaintiffs allege common
14 law claims and possess an independent basis for jurisdiction under CAFA, even
15 following the denial of class certification, Defendants cannot extinguish their
16 Seventh Amendment jury trial rights.

17 **A. Plaintiffs’ Common-Law Claims are Cognizable Outside of**
18 **Admiralty**

19 The Seventh Amendment protects the parties’ jury trial rights “in suits at
20 common law.” U.S. CONST. amend. VII. This right extends beyond historically-
21 recognized common law actions, encompassing “all suits which are not of equity
22 and admiralty jurisdiction.” *Curtis v. Loether*, 415 U.S. 189, 192–93 (1974). Here,
23 Plaintiffs assert common law negligence, gross negligence, negligent infliction of
24 emotional distress, and intentional infliction of emotional distress claims. (ECF
25 Nos. 1, 58, and 84). *See Ghotra*, 113 F.3d at 1055 (finding negligence and gross
26 negligence claims cognizable “at common law” under Seventh Amendment
27 jurisprudence); *Sample v. Johnson*, 771 F.2d 1335, 1344 (9th Cir. 1985)
28 (recognizing IIED as a non-admiralty claim); *Chan v. Soc’y Expeditions, Inc.*, 39

1 F.3d 1398 (9th Cir. 1994) (acknowledging common-law basis for NIED claims).

2 These are all types of claims which historically could be brought in state
3 court or on the “law side” (i.e., non-admiralty side) of the district court. *See*
4 *Wilmington Trust*, 934 F.2d at 1029 (“Many claims, however, are cognizable by the
5 district courts whether asserted in admiralty or in a civil action, assuming the
6 existence of a non-maritime ground of jurisdiction. Thus at present the pleader has
7 power to determine procedural consequences by the way in which he exercises the
8 classic privilege given by the saving-to-suitors clause.”); *Trentacosta*, 813 F.2d at
9 1559 (finding that claims are not “cognizable only in admiralty” where an
10 independent basis of jurisdiction for maritime claims exists and plaintiffs elect to
11 invoke jurisdiction on the “law side of the court.”) Therefore, Plaintiffs can
12 properly bring these claims outside of the admiralty jurisdiction of this Court,
13 where the Seventh Amendment jury trial right remains.

14 **B. Plaintiffs Properly Invoked Federal CAFA Jurisdiction**

15 Plaintiffs initiated the present action in this federal forum on April 8, 2020,
16 bringing claims arising out of the COVID-19 outbreak on the *Grand Princess*
17 cruise ship, which set sail on February 21, 2020 from San Francisco to Hawaii.
18 Plaintiffs asserted federal subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to both admiralty
19 jurisdiction, 28 U.S.C. § 1333, and the Class Action Fairness Act, 28 U.S.C.
20 § 1332(d)(2)(A) and (C). (ECF No. 1). Plaintiffs filed their Second and Third
21 Amended Complaints pursuant to these same dual bases for federal jurisdiction.
22 (ECF No. 58 and 84).

23 The Class Action Fairness Act, codified at 28 USC § 1332(d)(2)(A) and (C),
24 provides a federal jurisdictional basis where the proposed class members’ claims
25 exceed \$5,000,000 and where at least one member of the proposed class of
26 Plaintiffs is a citizen of a state different from at least one Defendant. *Exxon Mobil*
27 *Corp. v. Allapattah Servs., Inc.*, 545 U.S. 546, 571 (2005). As articulated in
28 Plaintiffs’ First, Second, and Third Amended Complaints, this Court has subject

1 matter jurisdiction pursuant to the Class Action Fairness Act Act (“CAFA”), 28
 2 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2)(A) and (C), because the claims of the proposed Class Members
 3 exceed \$5,000,000, and because at least one member of the Proposed Class of
 4 plaintiffs is a citizen of a state different from at least one Defendant. (ECF Nos. 1 at
 5 5, 58 at 15, and 84 at 17).

6 **C. Federal Jurisdiction Pursuant to CAFA Survives Class**
 7 **Certification Denial**

8 In 2010, the Ninth Circuit joined the Seventh and Eleventh Circuits in
 9 holding that the denial of class certification does not divest federal courts of
 10 jurisdiction under CAFA. *United Steel*, 602 F.3d 1087. The court reasoned that
 11 “post-filing developments do not defeat jurisdiction if jurisdiction was properly
 12 invoked as of the time of filing.” *Id.* at 1091. The Ninth Circuit’s ruling is clear: “A
 13 district court’s subsequent denial of Rule 23 class certification does not divest the
 14 court of jurisdiction.” *Id.* at 1092; *see also Bui v. Northrop Grumman Sys. Corp.*,
 15 No. 15-CV-1397-WQH-WVG, 2015 WL 8492502, at *4 (S.D. Cal. Dec. 10, 2015)
 16 (holding that plaintiff’s voluntary dismissal of putative class and class claims and
 17 submission of individual claims to arbitration “does not divest the Court of CAFA
 18 jurisdiction” because the “Court had proper subject matter jurisdiction premised
 19 upon CAFA at the time of removal”); *Visendi v. Bank of Am., N.A.*, 733 F.3d 863,
 20 868 (9th Cir. 2013) (finding that it is “well settled” that where CAFA jurisdiction is
 21 properly invoked, post-filing developments including class certification denial will
 22 not defeat such jurisdiction); *Madeira v. Converse, Inc.*, 826 F. App’x 634 (9th Cir.
 23 2020) (“Where, as here, jurisdiction was proper at the time of removal, subsequent
 24 dismissal of class claims does not defeat the court’s CAFA jurisdiction over
 25 remaining individual claims.”); *Campion v. Old Republic Home Prot. Co., Inc.*, No.
 26 09-CV-748-JMA(NLS), 2012 WL 13175903, at *3 (S.D. Cal. June 22, 2012)
 27 (“[J]urisdiction under CAFA was not extinguished when Plaintiff’s Motion for
 28 Class Certification was denied.”)

1 Defendants argue that because the class in this case was not certified, the
2 Court is divested of federal jurisdiction under CAFA. Such a contention directly
3 contradicts the Ninth Circuit’s holding in *United Steel*, which makes clear that a
4 federal court’s denial of class certification does not strip them of their federal
5 CAFA jurisdiction.

6 Defendants argue that Plaintiffs never properly invoked CAFA jurisdiction in
7 the first place due to the terms and conditions of the “Passage Contract,” that was
8 presented to the passengers after they booked their cruises and which deep in the
9 fine print contain a purported class-action waiver. Defendants cite to *United Steel*
10 in support of their proposition that “Plaintiffs’ agreement before embarking on the
11 *Grand Princess* to forgo bringing or participating in a class action [. . .] means that
12 CAFA jurisdiction was never properly invoked.” Nowhere in the text of *United*
13 *Steel* does the Court make such a holding; in fact, Defendants fail to cite any
14 authority asserting such a rule regarding class-action waivers stripping individuals
15 of their ability to bring class action claims in federal court. Nor does the text of 28
16 U.S.C. § 1332(d) make any mention of a lack of class action waiver as a
17 jurisdictional requirement.

18 While *United Steel* clearly held that class certification is not a necessary
19 condition to continued jurisdiction, the court recognized limited exceptions to this
20 general rule of “once jurisdiction, always jurisdiction.” The first is “when a case
21 becomes moot in the course of litigation.” *United Steel*, 602 F.3d at 1092. Such is
22 not the case here, where none of Plaintiffs’ claims have become moot. The second
23 is when there was no jurisdiction to begin with because “the jurisdictional
24 allegations were frivolous from the start.” *Id.* Defendants do not contend in their
25 Motion to Strike Plaintiffs’ jury trial demand (nor in their prior Answers, Motions
26 to Dismiss or related Replies) that Plaintiffs’ jurisdictional allegations were
27 “frivolous.” And the claims were certainly not frivolous. *Townsend v. Holman*
28 *Consulting Corp.*, 929 F.2d 1358, 1362 (9th Cir. 1990) (“The word “frivolous” [. .

1 .] is a shorthand that this court has used to denote a filing that is both baseless and
2 made without a reasonable and competent inquiry.”) Plaintiffs’ claims do not fall
3 under either exception to continued CAFA jurisdiction presented in *United Steel*.

4 Instead of citing authority to support their fictional rule that a class
5 certification denial destroys a party’s Seventh Amendment right to a jury trial,
6 Defendants attempt to analogize the instant case to one where a court held that
7 “federal jurisdiction is unavailable when the plaintiff has entered a binding
8 stipulation agreeing to facts that preclude federal jurisdiction.” Defendants cite
9 *Martinez v. Johnson & Johnson Cons. Inc.*, where a court found no § 1332(a)
10 diversity jurisdiction existed for a plaintiff who expressly sought to recover less
11 than \$75,000 according to limitations included in his Complaint. 471 F. Supp. 3d
12 1003, 1009-10 (C.D. Cal. 2020). *Martinez* is distinguishable: Plaintiffs here
13 properly and plausibly pleaded all statutory jurisdictional requirements for bringing
14 a class action in federal court pursuant to CAFA, alleging claims exceeding the
15 jurisdictional requirement of \$5,000,000 and meeting the statute’s minimal
16 diversity requirements. By contrast, the plaintiff in *Martinez* intentionally and
17 expressly limited his recovery to less than the \$75,000 jurisdictional requirement,
18 depriving the court at the threshold of subject matter jurisdiction. Here, neither
19 Plaintiffs’ Complaint nor any other pleading limited Plaintiffs’ ability to meet any
20 jurisdictional requirements of CAFA.

21 Defendants also cite *Standard Fire Ins. Co. v. Knowles*, 568 U.S. 588 (2013),
22 in support of their analogy. In *Knowles*, the Court held that even where a plaintiff
23 stipulated at filing that the putative class will seek less than \$5 million in damages,
24 removal pursuant to CAFA remains proper. *Id.* at 596. The Court’s holding rested
25 on the fact that the stipulation was not binding because “a plaintiff who files a
26 proposed class action cannot legally bind members of the proposed class before the
27 class is certified.” *Id.* at 593. Defendants argue that because Carnival’s class action
28 waiver was “binding,” Plaintiffs stipulated that jurisdiction would be precluded

1 pursuant to CAFA.

2 The factual scenario and holding in *Knowles* is inapposite to the present case.
3 *Knowles* involves a plaintiff who tried, but failed, to bind a putative class from
4 meeting a jurisdictional requirement under CAFA. Even when the *Knowles*
5 plaintiff unsuccessfully tried to stipulate to avoid meeting jurisdictional
6 requirements, the court still found that Defendants could not avoid federal CAFA
7 jurisdiction. Here, Plaintiffs have not even tried to stipulate to facts which violate
8 CAFA's jurisdictional requirements. Nothing in the Passage Contract purported to
9 waive federal jurisdiction under CAFA and no exceptions are made in the plain text
10 of CAFA to disallow federal jurisdiction in the event of a class-action waivers
11 contained in a private contract. Any application of *Knowles* is thus irrelevant.

12 A more appropriate case illustrating why CAFA jurisdiction survives after
13 class claims dissolve is *Bui v. Northrop Grumman Sys. Corp.*, No. 15-CV-1397-
14 WQH-WVG, 2015 WL 8492502 (S.D. Cal. Dec. 10, 2015). In that case, the
15 plaintiff voluntarily decided to dismiss her putative class claim and instead to
16 submit individual claims to arbitration. *Id.* The court held that despite the
17 plaintiff's dismissal of her putative class claims, because she properly invoked
18 CAFA jurisdiction at filing by properly pleading (and meeting) the statutory
19 requirements of CAFA, the court was not divested of subject matter jurisdiction.
20 *Id.* The facts of the current matter present even stronger indications that surviving
21 CAFA jurisdiction is appropriate. If even where plaintiffs move to dismiss their
22 class claims altogether CAFA jurisdiction remains, these Plaintiffs surely retain
23 CAFA jurisdiction where class certification was denied following a proper
24 invocation of CAFA jurisdiction.

25 **D. Even if Only Admiralty Jurisdiction Remains, a Trial by Jury is**
26 **Superior**

27 Even if this Court were to find that no independent basis for federal
28 jurisdiction exists pursuant to CAFA, leaving admiralty as the only federal

1 jurisdictional basis, Defendants’ motion to strike Plaintiffs’ jury trial demand
 2 should still be denied because (1) jury trials are permitted in admiralty, (2) the
 3 savings-to-suitors clause protects the jury trial right, and (3) traditional public
 4 policy concerns regarding a jury hearing complex admiralty matters are not present
 5 in this case.

6 **1. Admiralty Jurisdiction Permits a Trial by Jury**

7 There is no constitutional barrier to a jury trial in admiralty. *Fitzgerald*, 374
 8 U.S. 16, 20. Though this right to a jury trial is not guaranteed in admiralty cases, a
 9 jury trial is certainly not banned. *Id.*; *see also Waring v. Clarke*, 46 U.S. 441, 460
 10 (1847). “All of the circuits that have addressed the issue have concluded that, under
 11 *Fitzgerald*, admiralty claims may be tried to a jury when the parties are entitled to a
 12 jury trial on the non-admiralty claims.” *Luera v. M/V Alberta*, 635 F.3d 181, 192
 13 (5th Cir. 2011). The Central District has even noted that “jury trials have
 14 historically been more common in admiralty cases than in equity cases.” *Hanjin*
 15 *Shipping Co. v. Jay*, 1991 WL 12017913, at *1 (C.D. Cal. 1991); *see also Moreno*
 16 *v. Ross Island Sand & Gravel Co.*, No. 2:13-CV-00691-KJM, 2015 WL 5604443,
 17 at *19 (E.D. Cal. Sept. 23, 2015) (granting jury trial demand in admiralty case); *The*
 18 *Cont'l Cas. Co. v. Scully*, No. 09-CV-1970 W (NLS), 2010 WL 2736078, at n. 1
 19 (S.D. Cal. July 12, 2010) (finding that plaintiff’s admiralty and maritime claims
 20 may be tried before a jury); *Ghotra*, 113 F.3d at 1057 (allowing plaintiffs in a
 21 mixed-admiralty case to demand a jury for in rem admiralty claims).

22 **2. The Savings-to-Suitors Clause Preserves Plaintiffs’ Jury**
 23 **Trial Right**

24 The federal statute that confers exclusive jurisdiction over admiralty and
 25 maritime claims to federal courts contains a clause that saves to suitors “all other
 26 remedies to which they are otherwise entitled.” 28 U.S.C. § 1333(1). One remedy
 27 the saving-to-suitors clause safeguards is the right to a jury trial. *Lewis*, 531 U.S. at
 28 454–55. The saving-to-suitors clause “embodies a presumption in favor of jury

1 trial and common law remedies in the forum of the claimant's choice.” *Beiswenger*
2 *Enters. Corp. v. Carletta*, 86 F.3d 1032, 1037 (11th Cir. 1996).

3 In their Motion to Strike, Defendants argue that Plaintiffs had no choice but
4 to file this case in federal court due to the forum selection clause contained in the
5 Passage Contract. (ECF No. 107 at 8) (“[T]here is no possibility that this case could
6 properly be filed in state court: The Passage Contract that this Court has held
7 binding and enforceable requires that all personal-injury suits be filed in federal
8 court so long as there is federal jurisdiction, and cases improperly filed in state
9 court are removable to federal court.”)

10 Where a claimant is deprived of a choice of venue, the savings-to-suitors
11 clause preserves the claimant’s right to a jury trial. *Lewis*, 531 U.S. at 455–456
12 (holding that because the plaintiff had no choice but to file his claims in federal
13 court in admiralty pursuant to the Limitation of Liability Act, plaintiffs’ saved
14 remedies under the savings-to-suitors clause, including a jury trial right, remained).
15 Just as the plaintiff in *Lewis* had no choice in venue due to statutory constraints,
16 Defendants argue that Plaintiffs had no other venue option but federal court due to
17 the Passage Contract. *Id.* Because Plaintiffs have no other choice of venue but
18 federal court, the savings-to-suitors clause preserves their right to a jury trial. *Id.*

19 Further, in the face of cruise line federal forum selection clauses such as this
20 one, courts have enforced federal admiralty jurisdiction *so long as* it does not
21 deprive litigants of their right to a jury trial pursuant to the savings-to-suitors
22 clause. *See, e.g., DeRoy v. Carnival Corp.*, 963 F.3d 1302 (11th Cir. 2020) (where
23 the Court enforced federal admiralty jurisdiction pursuant to a federal forum
24 selection clause *only* because Carnival stipulated and agreed to a jury trial); *Leslie*
25 *v. Carnival Corp.*, 22 So. 3d 561 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 2008), *on reh'g en banc*, 22
26 So. 3d 567 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 2009) (where the Court’s enforcement of Carnival’s
27 federal forum-selection clause was conditioned on the Court’s understanding that
28 Carnival would consent to a jury trial).

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3. This Case Lacks Traditional Public Policy Concerns Regarding Juries Hearing Complex Admiralty Matters

Finally, this case does not implicate the traditional public policy concerns regarding a jury hearing a case proceeding under admiralty jurisdiction. Historically, cases arising in admiralty were tried by a judge, not a jury. Underlying this historical practice is the assumption that maritime actions involve complex, specialized issues which would be inaccessible to a jury and would require a judge’s expertise. *Gyorfi*, 58 F.R.D. at 114. *See also Moreno*, No. 2:13-CV-00691-KJM at *19 (“[A]dmiralty’s bench-trial tradition may yield when law and admiralty conflict and when state and federal maritime jurisdiction are concurrent.”)

Such concerns are not present here. Plaintiffs’ claims arise out of a COVID-19 outbreak onboard Defendants’ cruise ship. Plaintiffs allege that Defendants knew or should have known about the risk of a COVID-19 pandemic on board, particularly considering the heightened risk of viral outbreak in the context of a cruise ship’s close quarters. These claims rest on, among other allegations, Defendants’ prior knowledge and experience with deadly pathogens, a COVID-19 outbreak on another Carnival cruise ship, and Defendants’ specific awareness that at least one passenger on the same ship who sought treatment for COVID-19 symptoms while on board.

Plaintiffs’ theory of liability does not rest solely on specialized knowledge of maritime legal or factual issues. Rather, this case involves the responsibility of these corporations to take certain precautions to protect those in its charge from foreseeable and potentially deadly dangers. The spread of COVID-19, particularly in the tourism and hospitality industry, is of great public importance. Because historical concerns regarding the complexity of admiralty actions are not present here, and because a jury is an appropriate trier of fact regarding this subject matter, Plaintiffs’ demand for a jury trial should remain even if the Court does not find that

1 a jurisdictional basis exists independent of admiralty.

2 **CONCLUSION**

3 Defendants cannot destroy Plaintiffs’ jury trial right. Because neither this
4 Court’s class certification denial nor Carnival’s insertion of a class-action waiver in
5 the Passenger Contract divested this Court of independent federal subject matter
6 jurisdiction under CAFA, Plaintiffs’ Seventh Amendment right to a trial by jury
7 remains. Regardless, even if only admiralty jurisdiction governs, the savings-to-
8 suitors clause protects the jury trial right.

9 Dated: April 12, 2021

By: /s/ Elizabeth J. Cabraser
Elizabeth J. Cabraser (SBN 083151)
ecabraser@lchb.com
Jonathan D. Selbin (SBN 170222)
jselbin@lchb.com
LIEFF CABRASER HEIMANN &
BERNSTEIN, LLP
275 Battery Street, 29th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111-3339
Telephone: (415) 956-1000
Facsimile: (415) 956-1008

Mark P. Chalos (*pro hac vice*)
mchalos@lchb.com
Christopher E. Coleman (*pro hac vice*)
ccoleman@lchb.com
LIEFF CABRASER HEIMANN &
BERNSTEIN, LLP
222 2nd Avenue South, Suite 1640
Nashville, TN 37201
Telephone: (615) 313-9000
Facsimile: (615) 313-9965

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Gretchen M. Nelson (112566)
gnelson@nflawfirm.com
Carlos F. Llinás Negret (284746)
cllinas@nflawfirm.com
NELSON & FRAENKEL LLP
601 So. Figueroa Street, Suite 2050
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Telephone: (213) 622-6469
Facsimile: (213) 622-6019

Mary E. Alexander, Esq. (SBN 104173)
malexander@maryalexanderlaw.com
Brendan D.S. Way, Esq. (SBN 261705)
bway@maryalexanderlaw.com
MARY ALEXANDER & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
44 Montgomery Street, Suite 1303
San Francisco, California 94104
Telephone: (415) 433-4440
Facsimile: (415) 433-5440

Joseph G. Sauder (*pro hac vice*)
jgs@sstriallawyers.com
Lori G. Kier
lgk@sstriallawyers.com
SAUDER SCHELKOPF LLC
1109 Lancaster Avenue
Berwyn, PA 19312
Telephone: (888) 711-9975
Facsimile: (610) 421-1326

Attorneys for Plaintiffs

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Elizabeth J. Cabraser, hereby certify that on April 12, 2021, I caused to be electronically filed the above Plaintiffs’ Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Opposition to Defendants’ Motion to Strike Jury Demand with the Clerk of the United States District Court for the Central District of California using the CM/ECF system, which shall send electronic notification to all counsel of record.

/s/ Elizabeth J. Cabraser
Elizabeth J. Cabraser