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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE	)	
COMMISSION,	)	NO. CV-13-0157-LRS
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	ORDER GRANTING SUMMARY
	)	JUDGMENT TO PLAINTIFF AND
v.	)	DISMISSING DEFENDANT'S
	)	MOTIONS
USA REAL ESTATE FUND 1, INC.	)	
and DANIEL F. PETERSON,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	

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**BEFORE THE COURT** is the Defendant Daniel F. Peterson's Motion for Summary Judgment Dismissal (with prejudice), ECF No. 30, filed February 26, 2014; and Plaintiff Securities and Exchange Commission's Cross-Motion For Summary Judgment, ECF No. 34, filed on March 20, 2014 and noted without oral argument on June 18, 2014.

**SUMMARY OF FACTS<sup>1</sup>**

In 2009, Defendant Daniel F. Peterson ("Peterson") founded USA Real Estate Fund 1, Inc. ("USA Fund"), a Washington state corporation that he operated from his home in Spokane Valley, until May 2013. Peterson was USA Fund's Chairman, President, and, with his

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<sup>1</sup>The facts are taken from Plaintiff's Statement of Facts ("SOF"). Defendant Peterson did not submit a separate statement of facts in support of his Motion for Summary Judgment nor has Defendant disputed Plaintiff's SOF with specific facts or in any otherwise meaningful way.

1 wife, its majority stockholder, and he managed and controlled all  
2 aspects of its operations. Peterson sold USA Fund common stock to 21  
3 persons in exchange for money they provided. Peterson raised more  
4 than \$400,000 from these investors. The records from USA Fund's bank  
5 (J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, N.A.) reveal that from October 22, 2010  
6 through June 13, 2012, USA Fund deposited a total of \$435,495, which  
7 it had received from 21 different persons. Peterson stated that the  
8 purpose of selling the common stock of USA Fund to the investors was  
9 "[t]o raise capital" and the price per share and amount of each  
10 investment varied based on "how bad we needed the money and the  
11 purchaser, what they wanted to put money in." The funds paid by the  
12 investors, according to Peterson, "were put into USA [Fund]." Those  
13 funds were used, in turn, to pay compensation and travel expenses to  
14 Peterson, and to pay two other individuals who were working for USA  
15 Fund.

16 Peterson also exchanged an additional 61,042 shares of common  
17 stock of USA Fund for a debt owed to 26 persons from another failed  
18 investment scheme. On July 14, 2010, prior to selling or exchanging  
19 any of these shares, Peterson filed a Form D<sup>2</sup> with the Commission on  
20 behalf of USA Fund for his purported future multi-billion dollar  
21 offering. Peterson filed three subsequent amendments to the Form D  
22 on May 24, 2011, September 9, 2011 and January 30, 2013. The Form  
23 D and the amendments each announced USA Fund's intent to offer and  
24 sell between \$100 million and \$100 billion worth of securities. The  
25 original and first two amended Forms D further identified "revenues"  
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28 <sup>2</sup>A Form D is a brief notice that companies file to describe  
their intent to offer and sell securities in unregistered  
transactions.

1 of USA Fund to be at that time in the range of between \$25 million  
2 to \$100 million.

3 Peterson's assertions of positive revenues in the Form D and  
4 amendments were false, as Peterson has since acknowledged that USA  
5 Fund actually earned no revenues prior to the July 14, 2010 filing,  
6 and also did not earn any revenues through September 9, 2011, the  
7 time of the second amendment. The third amended Form D filed on  
8 January 20, 2013 indicated revenues of between \$1 and \$1 million,  
9 but Peterson has acknowledged that USA Fund still has zero revenue.  
10 The Form D contains a "no revenues" option.

11 In addition to the sales of shares to the 21 persons to obtain  
12 more than \$400,000, Peterson and USA Fund also solicited additional  
13 investors, and additional investments, by offering to sell them USA  
14 Fund common stock. In an email newsletter attachment Peterson sent  
15 in April 2012 to investors, he stated: "we have decided to give  
16 each of you a chance to increase you stock holdings [sic] in the  
17 company. The opportunity will run until the 16th of April. You may  
18 buy as little as 200 shares at \$2.00 per share. We will make  
19 available as a company enough shares to cover any requests received  
20 and paid for by the deadline up to 200,000 shares."

21 Peterson admits, he and USA Fund have no current means to make  
22 money for, or to pay back, the common stock investors, as USA Fund  
23 "has never opened for business" and is currently "inactive." But  
24 Peterson has consistently claimed that USA Fund will offer new  
25 securities in a multi-billion dollar offering that will be the  
26 mechanism by which current common shareholders will be enriched. In

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1 his marketing plan set out as Exhibit C to his Motion,<sup>3</sup> Peterson  
2 states that in July 2010, he and USA Fund prepared a filing for a \$2  
3 billion offering, just a few months before he obtained the first of  
4 the funds from common stock investors. Peterson claims that, through  
5 this new offering, raising "more than a billion dollars of  
6 investment capital is very reasonable," purportedly based on his own  
7 assumptions including selling more than a hundred million dollars of  
8 the new securities each month for a year.<sup>4</sup> Peterson claims this  
9 future offering has been made possible by a statute signed into law  
10 on April 5, 2012 called the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act or  
11 the "JOBS Act." Pub. L. No. 112-106, 126 Stat. 306 (2012). In emails  
12 to investors, and in public filings with the Commission, Peterson  
13 claimed that USA Fund would raise billions of dollars in investment  
14 capital by selling securities to the public. Peterson told the USA  
15 Fund common stock purchasers that the multi-billion dollar offering  
16 would be the means for a significant pay-out to them.

17 By way of example, in an April 28, 2012 email and offering  
18 letter to prospective common stock investors, Peterson claimed that,  
19 following his multi-billion dollar offering of preferred securities,  
20 the price of USA Fund common stock would increase to \$150 per share,  
21 as compared with the \$.50 per share they would be paying to obtain  
22 the stock. Peterson states in his Motion For Dismissal that he told  
23 investors about how the envisioned multi-billion dollar securities  
24 offering would be "secured" or "insured." For example, Peterson  
25 states: "The investors' invested capital is protected by placing a  
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27 <sup>3</sup>See ECF No. 30-4 at 1.

28 <sup>4</sup>See ECF No. 30; ECF No. 30-11 at 2.

1 percentage of those funds into selected cash equivalent items such  
2 as U.S. Government Treasury bonds/notes and Top Ten World Bank  
3 Certificates of Deposit which will accumulate interest annually,  
4 that interest is reinvested every year until the maturity buy back  
5 date at which time the investor is returned the amount of their  
6 investment.”<sup>5</sup>

7 On USA Fund’s website, it similarly states: “our investors will  
8 know the exact date on which the financial instruments from the U.S.  
9 Government and the Top Rated US and World Insurance and Reinsurance  
10 Companies will return to them their share of the protection fund  
11 balance.” On the same website, Peterson claimed that Merrill Lynch,  
12 a prominent brokerage firm and investment bank, would hold all  
13 future investments in an “escrow account” and that Merrill Lynch  
14 would “purchase and hold all of the financial instruments that will  
15 furnish the funds to pre-purchase all stock shares at the original  
16 purchase price.” Additionally on the USA Fund website, on the  
17 frequently asked questions (“FAQ”) page, it states:

18 Q: How do you assure the investor that they will not lose  
19 their investment?

20 A: Our protection works much the same as flood insurance  
21 or earthquake or tornado insurance. We buy from the US  
22 Governments financial instruments that will provide the  
23 money to insure against loss.

24 Peterson made similar claims in emails and letters soliciting  
25 investors for prospective purchases of common stock. On August 18,  
26 2011, Peterson told a prospective investor that Merrill Lynch would  
27 buy “guarantee instruments and then transfer the net proceeds to USA  
28 [Fund].” On July 9, 2012, Peterson told investors that the USA Fund

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<sup>5</sup>ECF No. 30 at 4.

1 had just begun "marketing of our 20 Year Preferred shares both on  
2 our own and in conjunction with Merrill," when there was no  
3 marketing arrangement. In an April 28, 2012 letter offering stock to  
4 more than 100 potential investors, Peterson said that Merrill Lynch  
5 would set aside 25% of the money raised from the second offering to  
6 preferred shareholders into an account "that grows and pays back the  
7 investors all of their invested dollars in the future."

8 In his Motion For Dismissal, Peterson describes the claimed  
9 guarantee, pointing to a 2002 Smith Barney brochure describing an  
10 account with a limited guarantee, as a supposedly comparable  
11 investment.<sup>6</sup> The Smith Barney brochure describes a five-year  
12 "Guarantee Period" "backed by an unconditional, irrevocable  
13 financial guarantee pursuant to a financial guarantee insurance  
14 policy issued for the benefit of the shareholders of the fund ...".<sup>7</sup>  
15 However, unlike the Smith Barney brochure, Peterson's stated basis  
16 for calling the USA Fund guaranteed or secured, did not include an  
17 arrangement for, or payment for, any such insurance. Instead,  
18 Peterson claimed, and still claims, that investments in Treasuries  
19 and CDs in an account supposedly managed by Merrill Lynch would  
20 somehow provide such insurance against loss.<sup>8</sup>

21 Contrary to Peterson's assertions to the investors, there was  
22 no "escrow account" or "protection fund" with Merrill Lynch, nor had  
23 Peterson ever discussed the possibility of such an account with  
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25 <sup>6</sup>ECF No. 30 at 4-5 ("Major investment firms such as Smith  
26 Barney have used this process for decades.")

27 <sup>7</sup>ECF No. 30-5 at 2.

28 <sup>8</sup>ECF No. 30 at 4.

1 Merrill Lynch. Further, Peterson's claims prove mathematically  
2 impossible. He promised that the "protection fund" would be  
3 comprised of 25% of the principal invested, but that the very same  
4 "protection fund" would itself quadruple in value to replace the  
5 remainder of the principal. However, the government securities (and  
6 bank CDs) Peterson said would be purchased with those funds could  
7 not achieve such returns. Between August 2011 and April 2013, the  
8 yield on U.S. Treasury instruments maturing in 20 years was less  
9 than 2%. Even if USA Fund had created a "protection fund" that  
10 remained invested for 20 years, to achieve the projected results,  
11 the protection fund would have had to consistently earn annualized  
12 returns of well more than double the yield on the U.S. Treasury  
13 instruments.<sup>9</sup> From January 1, 2010 through May 31, 2013, the  
14 6-month CD rates never reached 1%, often less than 0.5%.<sup>10</sup>

15 Peterson's promise to the common stock investors was based on  
16 a further misstatement that rendered his claims impossible. He  
17 claimed that early investors could split among them the monies  
18 raised from future investors, minus the 25% to be set aside for the  
19 "protection fund," and thus ignored, and failed to disclose, that  
20 those future security holders would also have a claim on the funds  
21 they invested. Peterson also disregarded that those monies were  
22 supposed to be invested in other projects, according to his own  
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24 <sup>9</sup>The Court takes judicial notice of the U.S. Treasury public  
25 reports on the <http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h15/data.htm>  
26 website.

27 <sup>10</sup>The Court takes judicial notice in the U.S. Federal Reserve  
28 Systems' historical interest rates published on the  
<http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h15/data.htm> website.

1 projections. Peterson thus told persons who were purchasing common  
2 stock that the various businesses and financial schemes of USA Fund  
3 would generate massive returns using the money of investors in the  
4 future offering. The wide-ranging business plan included investments  
5 in technology start-ups, mortgage notes, defaulted real estate,  
6 "conduit lending," and development of a resort called "Xanadu."

7 Peterson posted return-on-investment projections on USA Fund's  
8 website for each of the company's constituent funds, which purported  
9 to show projected earnings on a \$1,000 investment over 10 years.  
10 Peterson's projections showed consistent, year-over-year earnings  
11 culminating in returns for USA Fund investors of 500% to more than  
12 1,300%. Peterson was unable to produce any numerical analysis to  
13 support these incredible projections. Peterson's projections that  
14 he prepared for USA Fund common stock investors reveal his  
15 "assumptions" that the purported means by which common stock  
16 investors are paid out would be through raising money from sales of  
17 shares. Peterson projected raising \$1.4 billion cumulatively through  
18 such future sales of stock.

19 Peterson promised remarkable returns for early investors, which  
20 he projected on a per-share basis. In a January 18, 2012 email to  
21 prospective investors, Peterson sent a spreadsheet showing that an  
22 investment of \$10,000 (5,000 shares at \$2 per share) would yield  
23 \$376,552 in returns in five years. Peterson claimed that the board  
24 and Merrill Lynch have signed off on these projections. Peterson  
25 admits that he told investors that his scheme had the backing of  
26 two major investment firms, Merrill Lynch and BlackRock. Contrary to  
27 Peterson's assertions to investors, Merrill Lynch never reviewed or  
28 approved his projections for USA Fund. Contrary to Peterson's



1 claims, BlackRock denied that Peterson and USA Fund had any such  
2 affiliation. Instead, Blackrock clearly stated that it "does not  
3 have any investment or commercial relationship with the [USA] Fund."  
4 Peterson simply could not offer any numerical analysis to support  
5 his claims.

6 Finally, as of June 17, 2013, Peterson claimed to have resigned  
7 his position as an officer and director of USA Fund and each of its  
8 subsidiaries. The Preliminary Injunction Order prohibits Peterson  
9 from acting as an officer or director of USA Fund, or from  
10 controlling or managing it in any way until further order of the  
11 Court.<sup>11</sup> Despite the explicit prohibition against his acting as a  
12 director of USA Fund, Peterson stated in a Declaration filed in this  
13 matter on March 13, 2014, that he is a "member of the board of  
14 directors of USA Real Estate Fund 1, Inc."<sup>12</sup> Despite the prohibition  
15 against his directly or indirectly managing USA Fund in any way, in  
16 a Notice of Appearance on behalf of himself as a *pro se* litigant,  
17 Peterson stated that he would be "securing new counsel for Defendant  
18 USA Real Estate Fund 1, Inc. as soon as it is financially  
19 feasible."<sup>13</sup>

## 20 ANALYSIS

### 21 I. Legal Standard - Summary Judgment

22 The summary judgement procedure is appropriate for promptly  
23 disposing of actions. See Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 56. The judgment sought  
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25 <sup>11</sup>See Stipulated Preliminary Injunction Order, ECF No. 16,  
26 entered on June 20, 2013.

27 <sup>12</sup>ECF No. 33 at 1.

28 <sup>13</sup>ECF No. 29.

1 will be granted "if the movant shows that there is no genuine  
2 dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to  
3 judgment as a matter of law." Fed. R. Civ. P. 56(a); see also  
4 *Celotex Corp. V. Catrett*, 477 U.S. 317, 325, 106 S. Ct. 2548, 91 L.  
5 Ed. 2d 265 (1986); *Galen v. Cnty. of L.A.*, 477 F.3d 652, 658 (9th  
6 Cir. 2007). The moving party bears the initial burden of showing  
7 there is no genuine issue of material fact and that it is entitled  
8 to prevail as a matter of law. *Celotex*, 477 U.S. at 325. "A  
9 moving party without the ultimate burden of persuasion at trial ...  
10 may carry its initial burden of persuasion of production by either  
11 of two methods. The moving party may produce evidence negating an  
12 essential element of the non-moving party's case, or, after suitable  
13 discovery, the moving party may show that the nonmoving party does  
14 not have enough evidence of an essential element of its claim or  
15 defense to carry its ultimate burden of persuasion at trial." *Nissan*  
16 *Fire & Marine Ins. Co., Ltd., v. Fritz Companies*, 210 F.3d 1099,  
17 1102 (9th Cir.2000). If the movant meets its burden, the nonmoving  
18 party must come forward with specific facts demonstrating a genuine  
19 factual issue for trial. *Matsushita Elec. Indus. Co., Ltd. V.*  
20 *Zenith Radio Corp.*, 475 U.S. 574, 586-87 (1986).

21 If the nonmoving party fails to make a showing sufficient to  
22 establish the existence of an element essential to that party's  
23 case, and on which that party will bear the burden of proof at  
24 trial, "the moving party is entitled to a judgment as a matter of  
25 law." *Celotex Corp. V. Catrett*, 477 U.S. 317, 323, 106 S.Ct. 2548,  
26 91 L.Ed.2d 265 (1986).

27 In opposing summary judgment, the nonmoving party may not rest  
28 on his pleadings. He "must produce at least some 'significant

1 probative evidence tending to support the complaint." *T.W. Elec.*  
2 *Serv., Inc. V. Pacific Elec. Contractors Ass'n*, 809 F.2d 626, 630  
3 (9th Cir. 1987) (quoting *First Nat'l Bank v. Cities Serv. Co.*, 391  
4 U.S. 253, 290, 88 S.Ct. 1575, 20 L.Ed.2d 569 (1968).

5 The Court does not make credibility determinations with respect  
6 to evidence offered, and is required to draw all inferences in the  
7 light most favorable to the non-moving party. See *T.W. Elec. Serv.,*  
8 *Inc.*, 809 F.2d at 630-31 (citing *Matsushita*, 475 U.S. at 587).  
9 Summary judgment is therefore not appropriate "where contradictory  
10 inferences may reasonably be drawn from undisputed evidentiary  
11 facts..." *Hollingsworth Solderless Terminal Co. V. Turley*, 622 F.2d  
12 1324, 1335 (9th Cir. 1980). The court must not weigh the evidence or  
13 determine the truth of the matter, but only determine whether there  
14 is a genuine issue for trial. *Balint v. Carson City*, 180 F.3d 1047,  
15 1054 (9th Cir.1999).

## 16 **II. Violations of the Securities Laws**

17 Plaintiff asserts Defendant Peterson violated Section 10(b) of  
18 the Exchange Act, 15 U.S.C. § 78j(b), and Rule 10b-5, 17 C.F.R. §  
19 240.10b-5, and Section 17(a) of the Securities Act, 15 U.S.C. §  
20 77q(a), which prohibit the making of materially false or misleading  
21 statements to investors in the sale of securities.

### 22 **A. Securities Exchange Act--Section 10(b) and Rule 10b-5**

23 Securities Exchange Act Section 10(b) and Rule 10b-5 together  
24 make it "unlawful for any person, directly or indirectly . . . [t]o  
25 make any untrue statement of a material fact or to omit to state a  
26 material fact necessary in order to make the statements made, in the  
27 light of the circumstances under which they were made, not  
28 misleading . . . in connection with the purchase or sale of a

1 security." 17 C.F.R. § 240.10b-5(b). The courts have implied from  
2 these statutes and Rule a private damages action, which resembles,  
3 but is not identical to, common-law tort actions for deceit and  
4 misrepresentation. . . . And Congress has imposed statutory  
5 requirements on that private action . . . (citations omitted).

6 In *Blue Chip Stamps v. Manor Drug Stores*, 421 U.S. 723, 737-40  
7 (1975), the Supreme Court, relying chiefly on "policy  
8 considerations," limited the Rule 10b-5 private right of action to  
9 plaintiffs who themselves were purchasers or sellers.

10 A violation of the antifraud provisions is established by  
11 evidence that (1) defendant(s) made a material omission or  
12 misrepresentation; (2) in connection with the purchase, offer or  
13 sale of a security; (3) involving interstate commerce; and (4) with  
14 scienter. *SEC v. Platforms Wireless*, 617 F.3d at 1092; *SEC v. Rana*  
15 *Research, Inc.*, 8 F.3d 1358, 1364 (9th Cir. 1993). Each of these  
16 elements is satisfied here as discussed below.

## 17 **B. Securities Act Section 17(a)**

18 Similarly, Securities Act Section 17(a) prohibits any person,  
19 in the offer or sale of a security, from employing any deceptive  
20 device; or from obtaining money by means of material  
21 misrepresentations of fact or omissions of fact; or engaging in any  
22 transaction, practice or course of business which operates or would  
23 operate as a fraud upon the purchaser. 15 U.S.C. § 77q(a)(1)-(3).

### 24 **1. Peterson Made Materially False Statements to Investors**

25 Peterson made material misrepresentations of fact to the common  
26 stock investors and to potential investors, both in his own name and  
27 on behalf of USA Fund. Peterson acknowledged that he approved all of  
28 the content on the USA Fund website, and is therefore the "maker" of

1 USA Fund's misrepresentations made there.

2 Misrepresentations and omissions of fact are considered  
3 "material" if there is a substantial likelihood that a "reasonable  
4 investor" would consider them significant to the total mix of  
5 available information. *Basic v. Levinson*, 485 U.S. 224, 231-32  
6 (1988). See *United States v. Jenkins*, 633 F.3d 788, 802 (9th Cir.  
7 2011) ("the standard of materiality is an objective one," based on  
8 whether a "reasonable investor" would consider the false or omitted  
9 information "useful or significant").

10 The Court finds that Peterson made materially false assertions  
11 about the purported involvement of prominent investment firms,  
12 Merrill Lynch and BlackRock, in order to give the illusion of  
13 legitimacy to the USA Fund. Peterson's Form D filing with the  
14 Commission, on behalf of USA Fund, contained materially false and  
15 misleading claims about USA Fund's purported revenues of between \$25  
16 million and \$100 million, or later, between \$1 and \$1 million, which  
17 he now admits USA Fund has never earned. Peterson admitted USA Fund  
18 has never actually "opened for business". ECF No. 30 at 2. False  
19 claims of substantial unearned revenue, or the substantial  
20 overstatement of revenue, are "material" to reasonable investors.  
21 Peterson's numerous falsehoods were made to portray a seemingly  
22 legitimate, safe and fictionally profitable multi-billion dollar  
23 offering. *Gould v. American Hawaiian S.S. Co.*, 331 F. Supp. 981, 997  
24 (D. Del. 1971) (aggregate effect of numerous falsehoods most clearly  
25 evidenced materiality). *Cooper v. Pickett*, 137 F.3d 616, 626 (9th  
26 Cir. 1997) ("A company that substantially overstates its revenues by  
27 reporting consignment transactions as sales makes false or  
28 misleading statements of material fact.").

1 Peterson attempts to justify his actions by suggesting that his  
2 exceptionally high projections for returns are in keeping with real  
3 financial examples.<sup>14</sup> Peterson also argues that his sales of  
4 securities to the common stock investors are somehow exempt from  
5 registration requirements of the Securities Exchange Act and he  
6 should be protect from this suit and federal jurisdiction.<sup>15</sup>  
7 Finally, Peterson's arguments that the investors "solicited" him,  
8 and letters<sup>16</sup> he extracted from them after the fraud was complete,  
9 doesn't change this court's view that fraudulent, material  
10 representations were made. Had investors known that his basis for  
11 projecting the unrealistically high returns was Peterson's personal  
12 belief, they could have understood the real risk of giving their  
13 money to Peterson and USA Fund.

## 14 2. Peterson's Requisite Scienter

15 Scienter is an element of any Section 10(b) and Rule 10b-5  
16 claim, and it is also required to prove violations of Section  
17 17(a)(1). However, scienter is not an element required to prove  
18 violations of Sections 17(a)(2) or (3); rather, the lesser mental  
19 state of negligence will suffice. *Aaron v. SEC*, 446 U.S. 680, 701-02  
20 (1980). Recklessness is misconduct that is "so obvious that the  
21 actor must have been aware of it." *Hollinger v. Titan Capital Corp.*,

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23 <sup>14</sup>Peterson attempts to justify his claims by comparing his  
24 claims to three hypothetical "investments" that are purportedly  
25 akin to returns on investment exceeding 500% to 1300% : a purchase  
26 of Microsoft stock during some unstated 10-year period; a  
purported payment stream on an usurious "loan" of \$1,000 with an  
89% interest rate; and a payment stream to a pawn shop over a  
ten-year period. ECF No. 30-6, Exh. E, F, and G.

27 <sup>15</sup>ECF No. 30 at 30-2, Exh. A.

28 <sup>16</sup>ECF No. 30; ECF No. 30-3.

1 914 F.2d 1564, 1569 (9th Cir. 1990). It may be inferred from  
2 circumstantial evidence suggesting an obvious risk of misleading  
3 investors that is so great that it is simply implausible that  
4 defendant did not know about it. *Vernazza v. SEC*, 327 F.3d 851,  
5 860-61 & n. 8 (9th Cir. 2003); *In re Software Toolworks Inc.*, 50  
6 F.3d 615, 627 (9th Cir. 1994).

7 In the Ninth Circuit, "[s]cienter may be established,  
8 therefore, by showing that the defendants knew their statements were  
9 false, or by showing that defendants were reckless as to the truth  
10 or falsity of their statements." *Gebhart v. SEC*, 595 F.3d 1034, 1041  
11 (9th Cir. 2010).

12 The court has no difficulty finding that the requisite scienter  
13 existed, considering Peterson's descriptions to investors about the  
14 supposed affiliation with Merrill Lynch and BlackRock when there was  
15 no actual partnership. It is simply implausible that Peterson, who  
16 appears quite articulate in his pro se briefing, did not know full  
17 well that he was deceiving investors. See *Vernazza v. SEC*, 327 F.3d  
18 851, 860-61 & n. 8 (9th Cir. 2003).

19 **3. Misrepresentation Connected to Security**  
20 **Purchase/Offer/Sale in Interstate Commerce**

21 The remaining elements require that the material  
22 misrepresentations or omissions occur in the purchase, offer or sale  
23 of security involving interstate commerce. Peterson admits that he  
24 sold securities to the common stock investors. Each of the  
25 misrepresentations, including direct email solicitations, the USA  
26 Fund's website, and the Form D that Peterson filed for USA Fund, was  
27 used to encourage investors to invest. Accordingly, his fraud was in  
28 connection with the offer to sell or sales themselves. See *SEC v.*

1 Rana Research, Inc., 8 F.3d 1358, 1362 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.1993) ("in connection  
2 with" requirement is generally met where fraudulent statements are  
3 circulated or made available to potential investors). Peterson also  
4 made extensive use of the Internet, emails, telephone calls to  
5 persons outside Washington (such as Marek of Merrill Lynch) to  
6 perpetrate his fraud, satisfying the jurisdictional, interstate  
7 commerce element. *Fratt v. Robinson*, 203 F.2d 627, 633-34 (9th Cir.  
8 1953) (the use of mails, wires, etc. need not be the mechanism for  
9 the fraud itself). Accordingly, the evidence not reasonably in  
10 dispute satisfies the elements needed to prove Peterson's securities  
11 fraud. In addition, Defendant Peterson's untimely declaration (ECF  
12 No. 52) filed June 16, 2014, weeks after the pending motions herein  
13 were under advisement, is of no force or effect and does not change  
14 the Court's ruling.

15         The court finds that based on the parties' submissions, there  
16 is no genuine factual dispute remaining to be tried as Peterson has  
17 failed to meet his burden of providing specific facts demonstrating  
18 a genuine factual issue for trial. Peterson largely admits to facts  
19 that establish his liability for securities fraud. Peterson  
20 repeatedly made material statements to investors that had no basis  
21 in reality and which he knew lacked any support. Those statements  
22 included baseless claims both about the supposed lack of risk and  
23 the incredible, projected rewards for the investors in USA Fund, as  
24 well as false and misleading claims about USA Fund's purported  
25 prominent partners in its financial business. To the extent that  
26 Peterson may have had a "theory" as to how he could achieve such  
27 historical returns using Treasuries and CDs, he did not disclose it  
28 ///



1 to shareholders, as Peterson has not explained what of truth, if  
2 anything, he disclosed to the investors in his motion.<sup>17</sup>

3 Summary judgment is thus appropriate on the Commission's claims  
4 against Peterson him for violating the antifraud provisions of the  
5 Securities Act and the Exchange Act. *SEC v. Platforms Wireless Int'l*  
6 *Corp.*, 617 F.3d 1072 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.2010).

7 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that:

8 1. Defendant Daniel F. Peterson's Motion for Summary Judgment  
9 Dismissal (with prejudice), **ECF No. 30**, is **DENIED**.

10 2. Defendant Daniel F. Peterson's Motion for Reconsideration  
11 Re: Motion For Summary Judgment, **ECF No. 43**, is **DENIED**.

12 3. Plaintiff's Cross-Motion For Summary Judgment, **ECF No. 34**,  
13 is **GRANTED**. Summary judgment is granted in favor of the Commission  
14 on the claims that Defendant Peterson is liable for violations of  
15 the antifraud provisions under Section 10(b) of the Securities  
16 Exchange Act of 1934 [15 U.S.C. § 78j(b)], and Rule 10b-5 [17 C.F.R.  
17 § 240.10b-5], and Section 17(a)(1)-(3) of the Securities Act of 1933  
18 [15 U.S.C. § 77q(a)(1)-(3)].

19 The District Court Executive is directed to enter judgment  
20 consistent with this order and provide copies to Plaintiff and to  
21 Defendant at his last known addresses<sup>18</sup>.

22 **DATED** this 26th day of June, 2014.

23 **s/Lonny R. Suko**

24 \_\_\_\_\_  
LONNY R. SUKO  
25 Senior United States District Judge

26 <sup>17</sup>ECF No. 30 at 4-5, 9.

27 <sup>18</sup>The court notes that mail sent to Defendant Peterson on  
28 June 5, 2014 addressed to 700 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue #808, Spokane, WA,  
99204 was returned to the court as being undeliverable.