

As the Court understands the Joint Motion, the parties' objective in requesting the stay is to obtain a window of opportunity to explore resolution of their dispute via mediation without (i) continuing to accrue litigation-related expenses and (ii) adjusting to potentially game-changing court rulings (such as adjudication of the pending Motion for Conditional Certification) in the interim. The Court supports the parties' proactive efforts to explore whether an amicable compromise of their dispute is possible before plunging further down the expensive, time-consuming path of litigation. In terms of the foregoing principles, the undersigned concludes that a stay is likely to simplify the issues in question, streamline the issues for trial, and reduce the burdens of litigation on Court and parties alike. More concisely, there are considerable benefits to staying this action to enable the parties to focus their efforts on reaching an amicable resolution in the short term. This type of circumstance may be a compelling reason for a stay. *See, e.g., Advanced Bodycare Solutions, LLC v. Thione Int'l, Inc.*, 524 F.3d 1235, 1241 (11th Cir. 2008) ("district courts have inherent, discretionary authority to issue stays in many circumstances, and granting a stay to permit mediation (or to require it) will often be appropriate").

For the foregoing reasons, the Joint Motion to Stay Proceedings (doc. 31) is **granted**, and all proceedings (including, without limitation, briefing of the Motion for Conditional Certification and defendant's recent Motion to Strike) in this case are hereby **stayed** through and including **June 3, 2016**. The parties are **ordered** to file a joint report documenting the status of their settlement negotiations and the outcome of mediation by no later than **June 1, 2016**.

There is, however, a caveat. Ordinarily, litigation and settlement negotiations are concurrent, not alternate, tracks. The Court will not allow this action to sit idle for an indefinite period of time while negotiations are conducted. The 80+ day stay the parties have requested is lengthy, and the Court will not be inclined to extend it absent a compelling showing of good cause and diligence. Accordingly, the parties are strongly encouraged to make good use of this temporary stay to explore whether a compromise settlement is achievable. Should settlement not be reached within the allotted time period, the Court may lift the stay and enter an amended briefing schedule to finalize briefing on the pending motions without delay.

DONE and ORDERED this 10th day of March, 2016.

s/ WILLIAM H. STEELE

CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE