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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

ETHAN MORSE,  
Plaintiff,  
v.  
COUNTY OF MERCED, et al.,  
Defendant.

Case No. 1:16-cv-00142-DAD-SKO  
ORDER DENYING STIPULATION TO  
CONTINUE SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE  
(ECF No. 81)

A settlement conference in this action is set before the undersigned for May 16, 2017. Pursuant to the scheduling order, the parties submitted their confidential settlement statements one week prior to the conference. On May 15, 2017, the parties filed a stipulation to continue the settlement conference.

The stipulation to continue the settlement conference was filed at the last minute, after the Court has spent considerable time preparing for the settlement conference in order to make it meaningful to the parties and to ensure a greater likelihood of settlement success. Settlement is extremely important in this district where the judges have one of the highest caseloads per judge in the United States. Further, when a settlement conference is set before this Court, that date is reserved for the parties and the Court is not available to hear other matters.

When the case is not ripe for settlement conference, the prudent course of action would have been to determine earlier that settlement was not viable at this stage and to request a

