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*One copy sent to all addressees via fax to #717.291.4660*

SUBJECT: Westboro Baptist Church, et al. v. Trebilcock, et al.

Gentlemen:

## EXHIBIT A

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Greetings! We represent Westboro Baptist Church (WBC) and her members. The purpose of this letter is to put you on notice of claims my clients will be pursuing against each of you and any of your co-conspirators, and to afford you the opportunity to cease and desist your unlawful activity toward and against my clients, or to advise us of any facts which may refute the factual information contained below so that we may consider that information in making the final decision to proceed with litigation. Your response is expected within seven (7) calendar days.

Before proceeding further with the particulars of our clients' potential claims, please note: We are forwarding Mr. Snyder's copy of this letter to you gentlemen on the supposition that you will represent him in the matter of these claims by our clients, since you otherwise represent him. **Please immediately advise if you do *not* represent Mr. Snyder in this matter, so that we can direct this communication to him personally, not through counsel.**

The facts as we understand them are these: On or about March 3, 2006, Mr. Snyder's son, Matthew, was killed in battle in Iraq. On or about March 10, 2006, a funeral was conducted for Matthew at St. John's Catholic Church in Westminster, Maryland. At that same location, on that same date, before and during the funeral, various members of the veterans biker group called the Patriot Guard, as well as various people from the community (private and official), stood immediately outside the church, in the area surrounding the church, and along the path of the funeral procession, holding a public event to express a public position about whether God is blessing or cursing America in the matter of the deaths of American soldiers in battle. Prior to the funeral, a small group of members of WBC presented themselves on a public right of way (where clearly there is no reasonable expectation of privacy by anyone), in a place specifically set aside and designated by law enforcement, hundreds of feet from the church where the funeral was to be held, with the wall of bikers and community members (which numbered in the hundreds) between them and the church, to express a counter-and-religious-based message about whether God is blessing or cursing America in the matter of the deaths of her soldiers in battle. Before the funeral began, members of WBC left the public sidewalk, left the area, and indeed left the city.

Before, during and after his son's funeral, Mr. Snyder made numerous public statements and appearances, expressing his own viewpoints about whether his son had died for the sins of America, and otherwise making public statements to the media about the public issues related to the war in Iraq. This included his personal appearance on a New York radio program where he discussed this public topic at length. Further, for months Mr. Snyder has made the matter of his son's death a public cause, a topic of public discussion and in all respects made the particulars of his life, death, burial and funeral a public matter. (He always had the option of having a private unpublished funeral; he chose not to pursue that option. As recently as May 27, 2006, Mr. Snyder made his son's funeral the topic of his extensive public discussion during a public appearance at Sandymount Elementary, and in the *Carroll County Times*, pursuant to his ongoing pattern.)

Thereby Mr. Snyder thrust himself into the vortex of this controversy, and made the topic of his son's death even further a topic for public debate, and made himself a public figure.

Further, after his son's funeral, Mr. Snyder told the media that the presence of the bikers was "wonderful," that they "helped [him] through" the funeral, and that the "human shield" the bikers provided "worked," because he and his family didn't even know the WBC picketers were present. Further, the Web page of the Patriot Guard contains numerous statements indicating that they, in fact, blocked the family from seeing the picketers, as these few examples illustrate:

*"What an honor it was to be at the church being a "blocking force" between the family and the WBC."*

*"We were ushered into an area of the Church parking lot that was almost completely devoted to our group; Bikes, Cars, and Trucks. The physical layout of this mission has the church shielded from the UGs by the St. John's Elementary School. The protestors were placed at a site that would not allow them a straight line view of anything but the school."*

*"I believe that we hit our target by not allowing ANYONE to interrupt the funeral itself."*

*"Because of you we won a battlefield victory against those that would do such a thing as disrespect a fallen AMERICAN HERO!"*

*"The experience was all positive, even the flag wall of blocking the view and sounds of the protestors."*

Thereafter, it appears the rest of you gentlemen (the attorneys and the firm through other possible representatives) conspired together, with Mr. Snyder, and potentially others, to insert yourselves into the vortex of this public controversy, to abuse and pervert the legal process for a collateral and unlawful purpose, with an ulterior and unlawful motive, to defame WBC and her various members, to hold them in a false light, and to conspire to violate the constitutional rights of WBC and her members.

More specifically, you and each of you did the following: You concocted some alleged legal claims, which are clearly a sham, and clearly rest upon false statements and/or religious opinion, to prepare and file a complaint in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, on or about June 2, 2006, and in conjunction therewith engaged in these acts which establish the abuse of process:

1. One or more of the attorneys made public statements to the media that the human shield of bikers present to create a "human wall" "didn't work," which is the exact opposite of Mr. Snyder's public statements to the media contemporaneous with the funeral, thus demonstrating that the lawsuit you filed is an abuse of the legal process, by virtue of the fact that you knowingly premised it upon a lie, and made this false statement on the critical fact question of whether, as you allege, the funeral was disrupted, and thereby abused and perverted the legal process.
2. One or more of the attorneys made public statements to the media that this issue of WBC's religious position about whether God is blessing or cursing America in the matter of the deaths of her soldiers was personal to you, that you were personally outraged, and that you were motivated by this personal outrage in pursuing this lawsuit against the picketers.
3. One or more of the attorneys or other representatives of Barley Snyder established a Web page for the publicly-expressed purpose of soliciting funds and many frivolous lawsuits against WBC and her members for the publicly-expressed purpose of intimidating WBC and her members from engaging in protected religious speech and activity. This publicly stated goal, use or outcome of intimidating WBC and her members from engaging in protected religious speech and activity is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
4. One or more of the attorneys made public statements to the media that the goal of the lawsuit filed for Mr. Snyder, and other lawsuits improperly solicited, was to "shut down Phelps and his clan," which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome in any lawsuit filed or to be filed by you or your clients or any other person, as a damages action can not achieve the outcome of stopping future picketing. This stated goal is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
5. One or more of the attorneys made public statements to the media that the purpose of the lawsuit was to have people who disagreed with WBC and her religious message give "a message that people are not going to tolerate this," which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
6. One or more of the attorneys made public statements to the media that their and Mr. Snyder's purpose in filing the lawsuit was "to deter this group of people" from future protests in connection with the funerals of soldiers killed in battle, which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an

abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.

7. Mr. Snyder made public statements to the media that the purpose of the lawsuit was to get people who disagree with WBC to “take a stand” against WBC and her members to “end” the picketing, which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
8. Mr. Snyder made public statements to the media that the purpose of the lawsuit was to “bring an end” to the picketing by WBC’s members, which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
9. One or more of the attorneys made public statements to the media that the “goal of the lawsuit” is to “get [WBC] to stop protesting at soldiers’ funerals,” which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
10. One or more of the attorneys made public statements to the media that they were consulting with other attorneys to file other lawsuits, with the stated purpose of intimidating WBC and her members from participating in further religious picketing, which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
11. Mr. Snyder made a public statement that he hoped to use the lawsuit he filed to force WBC’s members to stop protesting by financial pressure, saying he wants the picketing “to stop,” which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
12. Mr. Snyder made a public statement that the purpose of the lawsuit was to get “these people off the street,” which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
13. Mr. Snyder made a public statement that the purpose of the lawsuit was to make the picketers “face stiff financial penalties” for their picketing, set precedent that “would result

in another suit, enough so that it prevents more picketing,” which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.

14. Mr. Snyder made a public statement that the purpose of the lawsuit was to “stop them from doing this to other people to other Marines,” which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
15. Mr. Snyder made a public statement that what he wanted from the lawsuit was “it to come to an end” (referring to the picketing), “that’s all [he wants],” he “wants it to stop,” and he “wants them [the picketers] to stop,” which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
16. Mr. Trebilcock made a public statement on Fox’s *The Big Story Prime Time* on June 10, 2006, that the purpose of the lawsuit against WBC and her members, that is, the reason for bringing the suit, was “to put an end to the reign of terror by this group” (referring to the WBC picketers), which is not a legitimate goal, use or outcome of a damages action, is not a legitimate use of the legal process, is an abuse and a perversion of the legal process, and is evidence of a conspiracy to violate civil rights.
17. The various attorneys made various public statements to the media, including those detailed above, of an inflammatory nature, clearly designed to further advance their abuse of process by tainting the fact finder and appealing to their emotions on these highly controversial issues related to the war in Iraq, the deaths of soldiers, and the question of whether God is blessing or cursing America, all of which is contrary to the duty of attorneys to properly litigate a matter in court. Thus, this untoward behavior by the attorneys named herein is further evidence of the conspiracy to abuse the legal process with the collateral and improper purpose of achieving the outcome of stopping protected activity.

In addition to your abuse of the legal process, you defamed WBC and her members, including by making public statements to the media, with actual malice, as follows (this list is ongoing as you continue to make unfounded and knowingly false statements about WBC and her members to the media, as you have made your public statements part of your planned intimidation of WBC members to try and stop her members from picketing on public sidewalks with a religious message):

- that WBC members are “abusing” and “terrorizing” family members;

- that the protected religious speech of WBC is not protected activity (when you know as attorneys that it is, and are charged with knowledge of the scores of public statements to the media by various lawmakers around the nation, including members of Congress, that this specific picketing is protected activity, hence their discussion about whether the restrictions they are placing thereon are reasonable time, place and manner restrictions);
- that the motive of the WBC members is to “further stick the knife in and twist it against the family,” (when you have articulated your knowledge of the writings of WBC members which clearly and repeatedly express a contrary motive, to wit, a motive to love their neighbor as themselves by warning them about God’s wrath and to stop sinning, all of which information you had quick and easy access to, including by sending a demand letter, which you failed to do);
- that WBC members are “preying on people at their lowest point,” knowing or charged with knowing that the motive and purpose of WBC is the opposite;
- that WBC members are “sick” and “absurd” by virtue of their religious position;
- that WBC members disrupted the funeral of Matthew Snyder, knowing or charged with knowing that Mr. Snyder himself stated the opposite contemporaneous to the funeral;
- that the religious viewpoints of WBC members about the manner in which Mr. Snyder lived (as published in the media, to wit, his divorce from the wife of his youth) and raised his son (by raising him in the Roman Catholic church, etc.) were defamatory and false, by the which you intruded into matters of the conscience, falsely accusing WBC members, and arrogating unto yourselves the position of dictating to WBC members what they should believe about God, His dealings with this nation, and the publicized lifestyle of this public figure;
- that the religious message and activities of WBC is a “gross travesty of decency,” knowing or charged with knowing the substantial scriptural basis for WBC’s religious message, which by definition makes it the opposite of “a gross travesty of decency;”
- that the Phelps family’s attorney members will “find something [to file a lawsuit], even if it doesn’t have any merit;” and,
- that WBC members are “victimizing military families,” are “demeaning the memory of these fallen heroes,” and have “crossed a line from protected First Amendment speech on

an issue of public interest to just going after families, individuals, and telling lies about them.”

These actions by each of you individually, and as a group, constitute:

- 1) abuse of the legal process, by using the legal process against WBC and her members, to accomplish a purpose for which the process was not designed, to cause harm to WBC members, for the stated purpose of coercing and intimidating them by virtue of lawsuits (regardless of merit or outcome) to stop engaging in protected picketing; and by attempting to achieve through the use of the courts an outcome which the court is itself powerless to order (witnessed by the fact that you sought no injunctive relief as you know you are not entitled to an injunction against future picketing, and therefore sought instead to gain that unwarranted outcome through this abuse of the legal process), and thereby perverted the legal process, to the damage of WBC and her members;
- 2) defamation with actual malice, given the easy access you had to the truth about WBC members' purpose and nature, and given the easy access you had to the scriptures to determine whether the religious precepts of WBC are founded in the scriptures (showing the great folly of your use of the legal system to endeavor to make such religious precepts a tort or otherwise unlawful);
- 3) invasion of privacy through false light, in that you made false statements about the WBC picketers, in numerous publications through the media; the statements falsely represented the actions and motives of WBC members; and the false representations are highly offensive to a reasonable person, all as enumerated above, and otherwise;
- 4) civil conspiracy to violate the civil rights of WBC members, you and each of you having openly and notoriously announced that you will abuse the legal system with the stated unlawful purpose of pressuring, intimidating and coercing WBC members to stop engaging in public picketing activity, contrary to state tort law, and research may reveal also contrary to federal civil rights law.

All other legal theories determined to be founded in fact and law will be pursued in addition to those itemized above. Your actions, individually and collectively, have resulted in damages and/or will result in future damages to WBC and her members, all of which damages you could have reasonably foreseen, and indeed were intended as reflected in your public statements contemporaneous with your unlawful abuse of process, defamatory statements and civil conspiracy to violate civil rights. It is a serious matter under the United States Constitution (which presumably the attorneys are all well-acquainted with, especially those with military history during which you profess to be upholding the Constitution, and thus must be



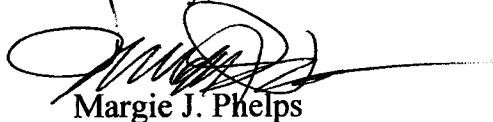
knowledgeable of its principles and content) to meet and devise plans to expressly set out to thwart and interfere with the activities protected under said Constitution, and it is an alarming matter when attorneys set about to engineer and spearhead such a conspiracy, openly and notoriously. Your actions are particularly grievous in this case, given that you have targeted the religious speech and activity of a group of people who are acting out of the greatest kindness, from their consciences, to warn a nation of people not to enrage the Lord their God by their sinful manner of life, in spite of hostility and unlawful actions by people such as yourselves. These picketers have, at all times, acted completely lawfully, according to the dictates of their hearts, and the damages you have inflicted on each of the members, and their households and their children, is substantial. Your actions are so unlawful and egregious unless you immediately cease and desist it will be necessary for WBC and her members to seek relief.

If you proceed with perfecting service in the federal case referenced above, we will consider the abuse of process claims ripe, and proceed with litigation. If any of the statements set forth above which the media attributed to you gentlemen is in error, in that you were misquoted, notify us of the fact, with details and particulars, including what part is a misquote and what you said instead, promptly, or we will consider the quotes to be accurate. Also promptly provide us with the names, addresses and other contact information, and position of each person at Barley Snyder or in any other organization with whom you have communicated about your plan to use litigation to force WBC members to stop picketing.

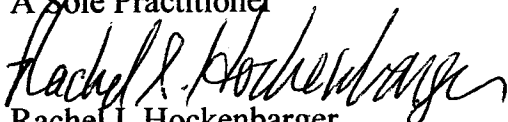
We look forward to your prompt reply, no later than seven (7) calendar days from the date of this letter.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Margie J. Phelps  
A Sole Practitioner



Rachel I. Hockenbarger  
For Phelps-Chartered