

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
ORLANDO DIVISION**

_____		)	
SOUL QUEST CHURCH OF MOTHER	)		
EARTH, INC., and CHRISTOPHER	)		
YOUNG,	)		
	)		
Plaintiffs,	)		
	)		
vs.	)	No. 6:20-cv-701-WBB-DCI	
	)		
ATTORNEY GENERAL, UNITED	)		
STATES OF AMERICA and ACTING	)	<b>JOINT STATUS REPORT</b>	
ADMINISTRATOR, U.S. DRUG	)		
ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION,	)		
	)		
Defendants.	)		
_____		)	

**JOINT STATUS REPORT**

Pursuant to the Court’s Docketing Order dated June 26, 2020, the Parties submit the following status report on the Court’s concurrent order (ECF Docket No. 24), granting a one-hundred and twenty (120) day stay of proceedings in this matter. Pursuant to such, the Parties hereby state as follows:

1. On June 15, 2020, the Parties filed a joint motion to stay all proceedings for 120 days “to allow time for Defendant the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”) to conduct the fact-finding that is necessary for it to adjudicate Plaintiffs’ pending Petition for a religious exemption from the Controlled Substances Act (“CSA”), which is at issue in this litigation.” Joint Mot. to Stay All Proceedings for 120 Days (“Joint Mot.”) at 1 (Jun. 15, 2020), ECF No. 23. Moreover, the Parties stated that the “120-day stay would also allow time for the parties to negotiate the details of the DEA’s fact-finding process and to negotiate a timeline upon which the DEA would issue a final determination on Plaintiffs’ Petition, potentially resolving this case without need for further litigation in this Court.” *Id.* On June 26, 2020, the Court granted the requested stay. ECF No. 24.

2. The Plaintiffs and Defendants have been actively pursuing resolution of the current matter, with the Plaintiffs cooperating in the Defendants' requests for information.

3. The Defendants continue with their preexisting inquiries to Plaintiffs. Both Parties intend to conduct further negotiations regarding "the details of the DEA's fact-finding process and to negotiate a timeline upon which the DEA would issue a final determination on Plaintiffs' Petition, potentially resolving this case without need for further litigation in this Court." Joint Mot. at 1.

4. Assuming the Parties' mutual, continued good-faith cooperation, the Defendants anticipate that DEA's fact-finding will be completed within ninety (90) days of the date of a Court order extending the stay in this case. The Parties anticipate that their additional negotiations, intended to result in a case resolution as described in paragraph 1, *supra*, should also be completed within ninety (90) days of the date of a Court order extending the stay in this case. DEA anticipates that, so long as the Parties are able to complete the aforementioned fact finding and negotiations within ninety (90) days of the date of a Court order extending the stay in this case, the DEA will issue a final determination on Plaintiffs' petition within one-hundred-twenty (120) days of the date of a Court order extending the stay in this case.

5. In light of the above, the Parties respectfully request that the Court extend the stay on these proceedings one-hundred-twenty (120) days from the date of a Court order extending the stay in this case, and permit the Parties to file a joint status report no later than seven (7) days prior to the expiration of that 120-day stay, further updating the Court regarding the Parties' progress. In the event that the Parties are unable to arrive at a resolution by the date of their joint status report, and in the event that both parties agree that a continued stay would not be helpful in arriving at a resolution, then the Parties' status report will also include a joint case management report, pursuant to Local Rule 3.05.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: October 16, 2020

/s/ Derek B. Brett

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*Counsel for Defendants*

### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that, on this 16<sup>th</sup> day of October 2020, I electronically filed a copy of the foregoing Joint Status Report. Notice of the filing will be sent by email to all Parties by operation of the Court's electronic filing system. Parties may access this filing through the Court's CM/ECF system.

/s/ A. Brian Phillips

A. BRIAN PHILLIPS