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PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 16, 2026

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CITY ATTORNEY HEATHER FERBERT SUES FIRE TRUCK MANUFACTURERS FOR ALLEGED ANTITRUST VIOLATIONS AND OVERCHARGING TAXPAYERS

SAN DIEGO – The City Attorney’s Office, on behalf of the City of San Diego and the People of the State of California, has filed a lawsuit against REV Group, Oshkosh Corporation and its subsidiary Pierce Manufacturing, Boise Mobile Equipment (BME), and private equity firm American Industrial Partners, alleging that the companies orchestrated a years-long anticompetitive scheme that consolidated the fire apparatus industry, restricted supply, and forced cities and fire departments to pay inflated prices for essential lifesaving equipment in violation of antitrust laws designed to protect fair competition.

The Complaint asserts that these companies spent more than a decade acquiring independent manufacturers of fire trucks and custom chassis, eliminating competition in markets that had historically been diverse and highly competitive. After gaining control, the companies allegedly used their market power to sharply raise prices, reduce production capacity, delay deliveries for years, and impose proprietary parts restrictions that forced fire departments to buy replacement components at two, three, or even four times their fair market cost. The City of San Diego alleges that it has paid hundreds of thousands of dollars per unit in overcharges on pumper, aerial, and wildland apparatuses as a direct result of this conduct, driving up costs for taxpayers and straining public safety budgets.

“Fire trucks aren’t nice-to-haves — they’re essential equipment that every community depends on to save lives,” said **City Attorney Heather Ferbert**. “When corporations exploit that need and illegally corner the market, taxpayers and firefighters pay the price. At a time when every dollar matters, we’re taking action to stop these practices, recover overcharges, and protect our City’s budget. These companies drove up costs, delayed deliveries for years, and forced cities into overpriced proprietary parts and equipment. This lawsuit seeks to stop these unlawful practices, restore competition, and protect public safety budgets statewide.”

According to the Complaint, the defendants’ consolidation strategy turned formerly independent builders, EONE, KME, Ferrara, Spartan, Smeal, Ladder Tower, UST, BME, and Maxi Metal, into subsidiaries of just two corporate families. The Complaint also alleges that, after acquiring their competitors, the companies deliberately shut down factories, restricted output, and touted unprecedented backlogs as a way to justify steep price increases to public agency purchasers. It further alleges that Pierce Manufacturing and Oshkosh created restrictive dealer agreements and warranty rules that locked cities into buying proprietary parts at excessive markups.

The City and People seek injunctive relief to end the anticompetitive conduct, divestitures to unwind unlawful mergers, restitution for overcharges paid by the City, civil penalties under California’s Unfair Competition Law, and treble damages for the City’s financial injuries, aiming to restore competition and deliver long-term cost savings for the City and its residents.

The case is being prosecuted by the Affirmative Civil Enforcement (ACE) Unit of the City Attorney’s Office, with Chief Deputy City Attorney Kevin King as lead and Baron & Budd, P.C and Simonsen Sussman LLP as co-counsel. The ACE Unit pursues public interest enforcement actions on behalf of the People of the State of California.

The Complaint is attached [here](#).

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