

Costa Mesa hires high-powered trial lawyer Jennifer Keller to defend sober living ordinances

The City of Costa Mesa has hired Jennifer Keller, one of the nation's premier trial attorneys, to defend itself against lawsuits and challenges to the city's sober living ordinances, which are designed to protect residential neighborhoods from overconcentration of rehab homes.

"I look forward to representing the City of Costa Mesa against untrue accusations that it has treated certain sober living homes unfairly," Keller said. "The opposite is true, and the City looks forward to being vindicated by a jury."

Keller's resume includes several victories in multiple high-profile cases, including the famous Barbie vs. Bratz trial, Auerbach vs. Daily and the United States vs. The McGraw-Hill Companies.

"By hiring Jennifer Keller, we hope that sends a message that we will vigorously defend our sober living ordinances and our neighborhoods from nuisance issues related to rehab homes," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "Our ordinance is fair and strikes a balance between the rights of residents and those who are recovering from addiction to enjoy our residential neighborhoods."

Keller will first go to work defending the city in a lawsuit filed by Yellowstone Recovery that challenges the city's sober living ordinances and will continue to defend the city in other related legal actions.

Keller's impressive resume notes she has tried over 150 cases

to jury verdict across a broad range of complex civil and criminal subject matter, including business, intellectual property, insurance and white-collar crime.

One of her most recent victories was the Chavez et al vs. MassMutual Life Insurance Co, a bellwether class action jury trial in which she secured a complete defense verdict as well as the People vs. Biane et al, a nine-month white collar jury trial that took the jurors a little over two hours to decide in favor of her developer client.

In the Barbie vs. Bratz trial, Keller represented MGA Entertainment and prevailed against Mattel, and the toy company was ordered to pay \$85 million in theft damages and \$85 million in punitive damages to MGA.

Just two years earlier, Keller won California's largest business jury verdict in 2009 with \$350 million awarded to her venture capitalist client in Auerbach vs. Daily. More recently, she represented Standard & Poors in the United States vs. The McGraw-Hill Companies in a case that eventually settled for over \$1 billion.

Described as a "gifted litigator," Keller is a past president of the Orange County Bar Association and is currently a member of the Chapman University Board of Trustees. Her clients include judges, public officials, law enforcement officers, CEOs, CFOs, lawyers, physicians, professional athletes, venture capitalists and entrepreneurs.