

**For Immediate Release:
September 23, 2013**

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**Statement by Bonnie J. Campbell on Behalf of Defendants in
*People of the State California, et al. v. Atlantic Richfield Company, et al.***

The following may be attributed to Bonnie J. Campbell, spokesperson for the defendants in the California litigation. Campbell is the former Attorney General of Iowa and led the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women during the Clinton Administration.

“In today’s closing arguments, the companies have shown that the plaintiffs failed to prove their case at trial.

“The California Court of Appeal (6th District) allowed the plaintiffs' claim to go forward solely on the theory that defendants had promoted the use of white lead pigments in paint on homes long ago ‘with knowledge of the hazard that such use would create.’ Under that court ruling, hindsight cannot be used to prove this case. The plaintiffs' case for present-day ‘public nuisance’ rests on scientific knowledge that changed over the years and was not known or knowable when white lead pigment was marketed for use in homes.

“As Dr. Jane Lin-Fu, a former HEW public health official who was its leading expert on lead and children in the 1960s and 1970s, wrote in 1985 in a book chapter entitled ‘Health Effects of Lead an Evolving Concept,’ ‘[I]t should be obvious that what constitutes the health effects of lead is an evolving concept that has changed dramatically since lead toxicity was first recognized in ancient times.’

“The fact is that, at every turn, the companies did the right thing – from funding ‘no strings attached’ research to a voluntary end of interior lead paint decades before the federal government required it. The plaintiffs’ claim that there is a ‘public health crisis’ is false. Blood lead levels in California are chasing zero due to the state’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPP), which is funded in part by the defendants, and is a public health success story that has resulted in a dramatic reduction in blood lead levels in children.”

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