

2025 01G 1510

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
IN BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY**

IN THE MATTER OF the *Companies'*
Creditors Arrangement Act, RSC
1985 c. C-36, as amended (the
CCAA)

AND IN THE MATTER OF an
application of Nemori Farms Ltd.

**ROYAL BANK OF CANADA'S
MEMORANDUM OF FACT AND LAW
(on Company's Notice of Motion dated 24 June 2025)**

Cox & Palmer
Solicitors for Royal Bank of Canada

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SUMMARY OF CURRENT DOCUMENT	
Court File No:	2025 01G 1510
Date of Filing of Document:	27 June 2025
Name of Filing Party or Person:	Royal Bank of Canada
Application to which Document being filed relates:	Notice of Motion dated 24 June 2025 filed by Nemori Farms Ltd.
Statement of purpose in filing:	To oppose certain relief sought in the Notice of Motion

I. Introductory Statement

1. Nemori Farms Ltd. (the **Company**) asks this Court to extend creditor protection under section 11 of the CCAA to Calvin Cameron and Sheldon Cameron, the Company's directors, for personal guarantees given in respect of the Company's indebtedness. This request is driven by recently refreshed demands issued by Royal Bank of Canada (**RBC**) on guarantees made in its favour by the directors. But section 11.03(2) of the CCAA prohibits the Court from making a stay order in respect of those liabilities. The Company's attempts to rely on the broad discretion in section 11 ignores the language of that section that makes its exercise subject to restrictions otherwise set out in the CCAA.

2. Likewise, the Company's request for alternative relief in the form of a director's charge is inappropriate as the charge cannot indemnify the directors for any liability under their guarantees to RBC. A director's charge under CCAA section 11.51 may only cover liabilities arising after the commencement of the CCAA proceeding. The directors' guarantee obligations are pre-filing liabilities. No other reasoning is put forward for making the charge, so granting it would be inappropriate.
3. This is the memorandum of fact and law of RBC in opposition to certain relief sought by the Company in its Notice of Motion dated 24 June 2025, namely:
 - 3.1. extending creditor protection to Calvin Cameron and Sheldon Calvin pursuant to section 11 of the CCAA; and
 - 3.2. alternatively, granting a director's charge.
4. References in this memorandum are to either authorities enclosed with it in the format [TAB X] or to authorities enclosed with the Company's Memorandum of Fact and Law dated 25 June 2025, in the format [C/TAB X].
5. RBC reserves the right to seek leave to file additional material on the Notice of Motion if the substantive hearing of this relief is adjourned on the scheduled 30 June 2025 hearing.

II. Relevant Factual Background

6. The Company is the applicant in these CCAA proceedings. Calvin Cameron and Sheldon Cameron (together, the **Directors**) are the Company's only directors and shareholders. By an Initial Order dated 6 March 2025, the Court granted a stay of proceedings as

against the Company under CCAA section 11.02 (the **Stay**). The Stay is currently extended to 30 June 2025.¹

7. RBC is the senior secured creditor of, and the CCAA interim lender to, the Company. The Company's debt to RBC, including interim financing approved under the CCAA, is over \$11,000,000. By any measure, RBC is the single largest economic stakeholder in these CCAA proceedings.
8. In connection with the pre-filing credit facilities between RBC and the Company, each of the Directors executed personal guarantees (the **Guarantees**) under which they guaranteed payment of the Company's indebtedness to RBC, limited under each Guarantee to a principal amount of \$1,000,000 together with interest and costs.
9. RBC issued demand letters to each of the Directors on the Guarantees on 2 June 2023 and 19 June 2025. As of the date of this memorandum, RBC has yet to commence any court actions on the Guarantees.

III. **Extending the Stay to the Directors**

10. It is not disputed that a CCAA court may, in appropriate circumstances, make orders staying proceedings or restraining the exercise of remedies against non-applicant third parties. However, CCAA section 11.03(2) specifically prevents a CCAA court from making a stay order "*in respect of an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations*".² This interpretation is supported by the ordinary meaning of the language used, the legislative history of the CCAA, and case law. Further, the cases relied on by the Company are either inapposite as they do not concern a director's personal guarantee obligations or are unpersuasive because the judge misconstrued or did not consider the provisions of section 11.03(2).

¹ The Company also asks the Court to extend the Stay to and including 31 July 2025. RBC will make oral submissions on this aspect of the Notice of Motion.

² CCAA section 11.03(2) [TAB 3].

11. First, an analysis of the statutory language shows that the Court cannot order a CCAA stay in respect of the Directors' liabilities under the Guarantees:

11.1. Section 11.03(1) permits the Court to extend a stay under section 11.02 to the debtor company's directors.

11.2. However, section 11.03(2) restricts the scope of that power, by providing that subsection (1) "*does not apply in respect of an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations*".³ Any action taken by RBC against the Directors on the Guarantees falls squarely within this restriction. Accordingly, the Court cannot make an order under section 11.02 that purports to stay or restrain any proceedings or actions on the Guarantees.

11.3. The broad statutory discretion under section 11 is not an escape route from the express prohibition in section 11.03(2). Section 11 is itself "*subject to the restrictions set out in this Act*",⁴ including the restriction in section 11.03(2). If the Court could use section 11 to make any kind of order that is prohibited or restricted in another provision of the CCAA, it would render both the proviso in section 11, and the more prescriptive provisions of the CCAA, meaningless.

³ CCAA section 11.03(2) [TAB 3].

⁴ CCAA section 11 [TAB 1]

12. Second, the legislative history supports the view that the prohibition in section 11.03(2) is intended to restrict the broad discretion under section 11, specifically as it relates to stays in favour of directors:

12.1. Prior to the Bill C-55 amendments to the CCAA brought into force in 2009, the equivalent provisions to section 11.03(1) and (2) were found at section 11.5, and read as follows:⁵

(1) An order made under section 11 may provide that no person may commence or continue any action against a director of the debtor company on any claim against directors that arose before the commencement of proceedings under this Act and that relates to obligations of the company

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply in respect of an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations

12.2. Accordingly, under the pre-2009 CCAA, it was clear that the broad authority in section 11 could not be used to stay a director's personal liability on a guarantee of the debtor company's debt.

12.3. In the Bill C-55 clause-by-clause briefing book prepared by Industry Canada for Parliament, the rationale for the amendments to what is now section 11.03 is described as "*technical ... to re-order provisions of this Act, correct cross-referencing and correct for grammatical errors*".⁶ There was no intention to change the substantive law.

12.4. In the circumstances then, it would be incongruent and contrary to the evident intention of Parliament if sections 11, 11.02, and 11.03 of the current CCAA

⁵ Bill C-55: clause by clause analysis (c00908), Industry Canada (Ottawa, 2007), CCAA s.11.03 (Briefing Book) [TAB 8]

⁶ Briefing Book [TAB 8]

were read as allowing the Court to extend the Stay to the Directors' liabilities on the Guarantees.

13. Third, the interpretation argued for above is supported by the only available case law that fully grapples with the interplay between sections 11, 11.02, and 11.03 in the context of a contested application, the Ontario decision in *Cannapiece Group Inc v Marzili*:⁷

13.1. In *Cannapiece*, the applicant companies sought an order extending the stay under the initial order to include a stay of an action against directors on guarantees of an applicant company's debt. The applicants argued that the court had the power to do so under CCAA section 11.

13.2. Penny J rejected those arguments and explained how the court's jurisdiction under section 11 is restricted by the prohibition in section 11.03(2):⁸

In my view, the CCAA, by its own terms, limits the general powers in s. 11 by expressly making the scope of those powers "subject to the restrictions set out in this Act". Section 11.03(1) permits the court to extend the stay power in s. 11.02 (regarding claims against the debtor company) to the directors of the company, if the director's personal liability arises under any law in his or her capacity as a director. However, s. 11.03(2) limits the power to order a stay by stipulating that s. 11.03(1) "does not apply" to an action against a director on a guarantee relating to the company's obligations. The use of the phrase "does not apply to" in s. 11.03(2) means that, although the court may make an order in the circumstances covered by s. 11.03(1), the court may not make such an order in the circumstances covered by s. 11.03(2). Since the [guarantee action] is a claim against the directors under a personal contract given to guarantee the obligations of the company, the provisions of s. 11.03(2) apply. Accordingly,

⁷ *Cannapiece Group Inc v Marzili*, 2022 ONSC 6379 [TAB 6].

⁸ *Cannapiece* at [34] [TAB 6].

I conclude that I do not have jurisdiction to order a stay in these circumstances. Such an order is prohibited by the express language of s. 11.03(2).

- 13.3. So too here. The Company makes the exact argument that was rejected in *Cannapiece* in the exact circumstances of *Cannapiece*. The Court should adopt the reasoning of this judgment and refuse the Company's application to extend the Stay to the Directors' liabilities on the Guarantees.
14. Finally, the case law cited by the Company in its memorandum is either (a) inapposite as it does not concern a director's liability under a guarantee of a CCAA debtor's obligations, or (b) is not persuasive authority because the judges misdirected themselves on the law or (like the Company's own memorandum) did not cite or address the impact of section 11.03(2):
- 14.1. None of *Nordstrom Canada Retail Inc.*,⁹ *Bed Bath & Beyond Canada Ltd.*,¹⁰ or *2675970 Ontario Inc.*¹¹ involved a stay of proceedings in respect of a director's personal guarantee of the CCAA debtor's debts. Nor do any of those cases address or consider section 11.03(2). Accordingly, they have no relevance to the issue before this Court.
- 14.2. In *Pride Group Holdings Inc.*,¹² the Ontario court extended the CCAA stay to include certain personal guarantors who were directors of the CCAA debtors. However, in doing so, Morawetz CJSC misdirected himself on the law when, at [33], he states that section 11.03(2) "*provides that a stay pursuant to section 11.02 does not affect an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations*". As shown above, section 11.03(2) is not so passive; it expressly provides that such a stay cannot be made under section 11.02. In misstating the import of section 11.03(2), the

⁹ *Nordstrom Canada Retail Inc.*, 2023 ONSC 1422 [TAB 7].

¹⁰ *Bed Bath & Beyond Canada Ltd.*, 2023 ONSC 1014 [C/TAB 4].

¹¹ *2675970 Ontario Inc.*, 2024 ONSC 6174 [C/TAB 5].

¹² *Pride Group Holdings Inc.*, 2024 ONSC 1830 [C/TAB 3].

judge reached an erroneous conclusion and the judgment should not be followed here. Further, the relief does not appear to have been opposed, limiting the persuasive value of the judgment.

14.3. In *Re Balboa Inc.*,¹³ Kimmel J made the same error of law, using language identical to *Pride Group*.¹⁴ Also as in *Pride Group*, the relief in *Balboa* does not appear to have been opposed. For the same reasons, this judgment should not be followed here.

14.4. In *Arrangement relatif à ELNA Medical Group Inc/Groupe medical ELNA inc.*,¹⁵ the Quebec court did not refer to or consider section 11.03(2). Again, the request for an extension of the stay to the director's guarantee liabilities does not appear to have been opposed. The judgment is accordingly of limited persuasive value and should not be followed here.

15. Accordingly, on the correct interpretation of the CCAA, supported by both the ordinary meaning of the language used and the legislative history, section 11.03(2) prohibits the Court from extending the CCAA stay to the Directors' liabilities on the Guarantees. The only judgment that fully considered the issue on a contested application, *Cannapiece*, came to the same conclusion. The Court does not have jurisdiction to make the order requested by the Company, and the request should be dismissed.

IV. Granting a Director's Charge

16. At [9] of its Notice of Motion, the Company says that, as an alternative to the extension of the Stay to the Directors' liabilities on the Guarantees, it seeks a director's charge.

¹³ *Re Balboa Inc* (January 23, 2024), Toronto, CV-24-00713254-00CL [TAB 5]. This case is not referred to by the Company but is cited as authority in *Pride Group*.

¹⁴ *Balboa* at [29] [TAB 5].

¹⁵ *Arrangement relatif à ELNA Medical Group Inc/Groupe médicale ELNA inc*, 2024 QCCS 4541 [C/TAB 6].

17. This request is misplaced. Under CCAA section 11.51(1), the Court may only grant such a charge *“to indemnify the director or officer against obligations and liabilities that they may incur as a director or officer of the company after the commencement of proceedings under this Act”*¹⁶ (emphasis added). But the Directors’ liabilities under the Guarantees pre-date the commencement of the Company’s CCAA proceedings and cannot be covered by a charge under section 11.51.
18. Nor is there any rational basis for allowing the directors to shift their personal liabilities, unrelated to their acts or omissions as directors or officers of the Company, to the Company and ultimately to its creditors. If the Court sanctioned that approach, it would render personal guarantees effectively worthless when the primary borrower files under the CCAA.
19. The law already provides the Directors with suitable recourse against the Company in respect of the Guarantees, by granting them a subrogated claim against the Company for any payments or recoveries on the Guarantees.
20. The Company’s evidence does not offer any other reasoning beyond the threat of action on the Guarantees for seeking the charge. Accordingly, the request for alternative relief should be dismissed.

V. Conclusion

21. In seeking to extend the Stay to the Directors’ liabilities on the Guarantees, or alternatively for a director’s charge in respect of those liabilities, the Company has asked the Court to exercise a power that it does not have under the CCAA.
22. Due to the lack of jurisdiction to grant such relief, the Court should dismiss the requests to extend the Stay to the Directors or to make a director’s charge.

¹⁶ CCAA section 11.51 [TAB 4].

23. All of which is respectfully submitted.

DATED at St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, this 27th day of June, 2025.



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AUTHORITIES LIST

<i>Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act</i> , RSC 1985 c. C-36, as amended, section 11	TAB 1
<i>Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act</i> , RSC 1985 c. C-36, as amended, section 11.02	TAB 2
<i>Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act</i> , RSC 1985 c. C-36, as amended, section 11.03	TAB 3
<i>Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act</i> , RSC 1985 c. C-36, as amended, section 11.51	TAB 4
<i>Re Balboa Inc</i> (January 23, 2024), Toronto, CV-24-00713254-00CL	TAB 5
<i>Cannapiece Group Inc v Marzili</i> , 2022 ONSC 6379	TAB 6
<i>Nordstrom Canada Retail Inc</i> , 2023 ONSC 1422	TAB 7
Bill C-55: clause by clause analysis (c100908), Industry Canada (Ottawa, 2007), CCAA s.11.03	TAB 8

TAB 1

Canada Federal Statutes
Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act
Part II — Jurisdiction of Courts (ss. 9-18.5)

R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36, s. 11

s 11. General power of court

Currency

11. General power of court

Despite anything in the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* or the *Winding-up and Restructuring Act*, if an application is made under this Act in respect of a debtor company, the court, on the application of any person interested in the matter, may, subject to the restrictions set out in this Act, on notice to any other person or without notice as it may see fit, make any order that it considers appropriate in the circumstances.

Amendment History

1992, c. 27, s. 90; 1996, c. 6, s. 167(1)(d); 1997, c. 12, s. 124; 2005, c. 47, s. 128

Currency

Federal English Statutes reflect amendments current to September 25, 2024

Federal English Regulations Current to Gazette EXTRA Vol. 158:3 (December 6, 2024)

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TAB 2

Canada Federal Statutes
Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act
Part II — Jurisdiction of Courts (ss. 9-18.5)

R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36, s. 11.02

s 11.02

Currency

11.02

11.02(1) Stays, etc. — initial application

A court may, on an initial application in respect of a debtor company, make an order on any terms that it may impose, effective for the period that the court considers necessary, which period may not be more than 10 days,

- (a) staying, until otherwise ordered by the court, all proceedings taken or that might be taken in respect of the company under the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* or the *Winding-up and Restructuring Act*;
- (b) restraining, until otherwise ordered by the court, further proceedings in any action, suit or proceeding against the company; and
- (c) prohibiting, until otherwise ordered by the court, the commencement of any action, suit or proceeding against the company.

11.02(2) Stays, etc. — other than initial application

A court may, on an application in respect of a debtor company other than an initial application, make an order, on any terms that it may impose,

- (a) staying, until otherwise ordered by the court, for any period that the court considers necessary, all proceedings taken or that might be taken in respect of the company under an Act referred to in paragraph (1)(a);
- (b) restraining, until otherwise ordered by the court, further proceedings in any action, suit or proceeding against the company; and
- (c) prohibiting, until otherwise ordered by the court, the commencement of any action, suit or proceeding against the company.

11.02(3) Burden of proof on application

The court shall not make the order unless

- (a) the applicant satisfies the court that circumstances exist that make the order appropriate; and
- (b) in the case of an order under subsection (2), the applicant also satisfies the court that the applicant has acted, and is acting, in good faith and with due diligence.

11.02(4) Restriction

Orders doing anything referred to in subsection (1) or (2) may only be made under this section.

Amendment History

2005, c. 47, s. 128; 2019, c. 29, s. 137

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Federal English Statutes reflect amendments current to September 25, 2024

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TAB 3

Canada Federal Statutes
Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act
Part II — Jurisdiction of Courts (ss. 9-18.5)

R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36, s. 11.03

s 11.03

Currency

11.03

11.03(1) Stays — directors

An order made under section 11.02 may provide that no person may commence or continue any action against a director of the company on any claim against directors that arose before the commencement of proceedings under this Act and that relates to obligations of the company if directors are under any law liable in their capacity as directors for the payment of those obligations, until a compromise or an arrangement in respect of the company, if one is filed, is sanctioned by the court or is refused by the creditors or the court.

11.03(2) Exception

Subsection (1) does not apply in respect of an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations or an action seeking injunctive relief against a director in relation to the company.

11.03(3) Persons deemed to be directors

If all of the directors have resigned or have been removed by the shareholders without replacement, any person who manages or supervises the management of the business and affairs of the company is deemed to be a director for the purposes of this section.

Amendment History

2005, c. 47, s. 128

Currency

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Canada Federal Statutes
Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act
Part II — Jurisdiction of Courts (ss. 9-18.5)

R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36, s. 11.51

s 11.51

Currency

11.51

11.51(1) Security or charge relating to director's indemnification

On application by a debtor company and on notice to the secured creditors who are likely to be affected by the security or charge, the court may make an order declaring that all or part of the property of the company is subject to a security or charge — in an amount that the court considers appropriate — in favour of any director or officer of the company to indemnify the director or officer against obligations and liabilities that they may incur as a director or officer of the company after the commencement of proceedings under this Act.

11.51(2) Priority

The court may order that the security or charge rank in priority over the claim of any secured creditor of the company.

11.51(3) Restriction — indemnification insurance

The court may not make the order if in its opinion the company could obtain adequate indemnification insurance for the director or officer at a reasonable cost.

11.51(4) Negligence, misconduct or fault

The court shall make an order declaring that the security or charge does not apply in respect of a specific obligation or liability incurred by a director or officer if in its opinion the obligation or liability was incurred as a result of the director's or officer's gross negligence or wilful misconduct or, in Quebec, the director's or officer's gross or intentional fault.

Amendment History

2005, c. 47, s. 128; 2007, c. 36, s. 66

Currency

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TAB 4

Canada Federal Statutes
Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act
Part II — Jurisdiction of Courts (ss. 9-18.5)

R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36, s. 11.51

s 11.51

Currency

11.51

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The court may not make the order if in its opinion the company could obtain adequate indemnification insurance for the director or officer at a reasonable cost.

11.51(4) Negligence, misconduct or fault

The court shall make an order declaring that the security or charge does not apply in respect of a specific obligation or liability incurred by a director or officer if in its opinion the obligation or liability was incurred as a result of the director's or officer's gross negligence or wilful misconduct or, in Quebec, the director's or officer's gross or intentional fault.

Amendment History

2005, c. 47, s. 128; 2007, c. 36, s. 66

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Federal English Regulations Current to Gazette EXTRA Vol. 158:3 (December 6, 2024)

TAB 5



ONTARIO SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE
(COMMERCIAL LIST)

COUNSEL SLIP/ENDORSEMENT

COURT FILE NO.: CV-24-00713254-00CL DATE: 23 January 2024

NO. ON LIST: 5
(12:00pm)

TITLE OF PROCEEDING: IN THE MATTER OF A PLAN OF COMPROMISE OR
ARRANGEMENT OF BALBOA INC., DSPLN INC.,
HAPPY GILMORE INC., INTERLUDE INC.,
MULTIVILLE INC., THE PINK FLAMINGO INC.,
HOMETOWN HOUSING INC., THE MULLIGAN
INC., HORSES IN THE BACK INC., NEAT NESTS
INC., AND JOINT CAPTAIN REAL ESTATE INC.

BEFORE JUSTICE: KIMMEL

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ENDORSEMENT OF JUSTICE KIMMEL:

The Applicants' Business, Indebtedness and Liquidity Crisis

1. Balboa Inc., DSPLN Inc., Happy Gilmore Inc., Interlude Inc., Multiville Inc., The Pink Flamingo Inc., Hometown Housing Inc., The Mulligan Inc., Horses In The Back Inc., Neat Nests Inc., and Joint Captain Real Estate Inc. (collectively, the "Applicants"), all Canadian privately held companies, seek relief pursuant to an order (the "Initial Order") under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36, as amended (the "CCAA").
2. The Applicants are all subsidiaries of (i) One Happy Island Inc. ("Happy Island"), (ii) Keely Korp Inc. ("Keely Korp"), (iii) 2657677 Ontario Inc. ("265 Inc."), or (iv) Sail Away Real Estate Inc. ("Sail Away", and collectively, the "Non-Applicant Parent Cos."), or some combination thereof. These companies are each, in turn, directly or indirectly controlled and managed by one or more of three individuals, Aruba Butt, Dylan Suitor, and Ryan Molony who are variously the indirect shareholders, directors and officers (the "Affiliated Individuals" also later referred to as the "Additional Stay Parties").
3. The Applicants currently only have one employee who is employed full-time by The Mulligan Inc. The Mulligan Inc. has approximately \$55,000 in unpaid source deductions.
4. The Applicants specialize in the acquisition, renovation and leasing of distressed residential real estate in what they considered to be undervalued markets throughout Ontario (the "Business"). The Applicants currently own 405 residential properties (collectively, the "Properties" and each, a "Property"), containing 631 rental units, including 424 currently-tenanted rental units, and a single non-operating golf course.
5. The purchase, renovation and related costs of the Properties were financed through (i) first and second mortgage loans, and (ii) unsecured promissory notes. This debt is predominantly held by hundreds of individual real estate investors (the "Lenders"). The Applicants also have an estimated 1,000 tenants in their Properties. The applicants and their affiliates (collectively, the "Companies") are one of the largest holders of residential real estate in Ontario.
6. As of December 31, 2023, there is approximately \$81,455,930 in principal outstanding under 390 First Mortgage Loans. As of December 31, 2023, there is approximately \$8,642,697 in principal outstanding under the Second Mortgage Loans. The majority of these First and Second Mortgage Loans are in default. Substantially all of the First and Second Mortgage Loans were executed by the Affiliated Individuals, purportedly in their capacity as guarantor¹.
7. The Applicants have collectively issued approximately 802 unsecured promissory notes (as amended from time to time, the "Promissory Notes"). Approximately 602 of the Promissory Notes were issued to

¹ The Applicants have indicated that there may be challenges to the validity and scope of guarantees provided by the Affiliated Individuals in respect of the First and Second Mortgage Loans and the Promissory Notes.

The Lion's Share Group Inc., an affiliate of the Hamilton-based mortgage brokerage, The Windrose Group Inc. ("Windrose"), which was the broker that sourced and placed the First Mortgage Loans. The remaining Promissory Notes were issued to First Mortgage Lenders directly. The majority of these Promissory Notes are currently in default. They were also signed by the Individual Affiliates purportedly as guarantors. As of December 31, 2023, the Applicants currently owe the principal amount of \$54,236,109.51 pursuant to the Promissory Notes.

8. Commencing in 2022, the Applicants undertook various refinancing and sale initiatives, with some modest success. However, they were unable to find a comprehensive solution to their mounting debt and lower than anticipated revenues and they have suffered substantial losses in the past eighteen months. They have been trying since August 2023, with the assistance of a professional financial advisor, Howards Capital Corp. ("HCC"), to obtain a comprehensive refinancing solution for their funded indebtedness.
9. They now face a severe liquidity crisis and are generally unable to meet their obligations as they become due under their funded debt (some of which is secured and some of which is not) and they also have significant tax and other unsecured obligations to trade creditors, affiliates, and utilities. The ability of the Applicants to earn revenue or profits from their Business has been negatively impacted by their lack of capital to fund renovations.
10. As of December 31, 2023, the funded indebtedness of the Applicants totaled approximately \$144,350,000. The estimated total book value of their collective assets, based on available financial statements for years ended 2021 and 2022 (as the case may be) was approximately \$127,858,943.
11. Between them, the Applicants currently have less than \$100,000 cash on hand.
12. In recent months, the Applicants have received over 50 demand letters, notices of default, notices of intention to enforce security and notices of sale under mortgage, among other demands and notices, and are named in approximately 32 statements of claim that have been filed in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. In 27 of these instances, an Affiliated Individuals is also named as a defendant. These actions remain unresolved and the Applicants and the Affiliated Individuals have not responded to or taken any material steps in connection therewith.
13. In light of their current liquidity crisis, limited cash on hand, and numerous defaults and related enforcement proceedings, the Applicants have concluded that they can no longer continue to operate the Business absent the relief sought under the Initial Order. The Proposed Monitor, KSV Restructuring Inc. ("KSV"), believes that the relief sought is reasonable and necessary in the circumstances and supports the Applicants' requested Initial Order.

The CCAA Application

14. The Applicants believe these CCAA proceedings present the only viable means to preserve and maximize the value of the Business for the benefit of the Applicants' stakeholders. The relief sought in the Initial Order will allow the Applicants the breathing space needed to pursue a comprehensive refinancing or restructuring and implement a consensual plan of arrangement, if one can be achieved.
15. The issues raised by the relief sought are whether:
 - a. The Applicants meet the criteria for CCAA protection, including the Initial Stay, and have proposed a qualified Monitor;
 - b. The proceedings should be stayed against the Affiliated Individuals (a.k.a., the Additional Stay Parties);
 - c. The Lender Representative Counsel should be appointed; and
 - d. The Administration Charge (as defined below) should be granted.

Analysis

a) The CCAA Applies and the Initial Stay and Proposed Monitor are Appropriate

16. Section 9(1) of the CCAA provides that an application under the CCAA may be made to the court that has jurisdiction in the province where the debtor company has its “head office or chief place of business.” The CCAA applies to a “debtor company” or “affiliated debtor companies” that is, among other things, “insolvent”, which has been interpreted to include companies that are reasonably expected to run out of liquidity in the time it may take to implement a restructuring. See *Re Just Energy Corp.*, 2021 ONSC 1793, at para. 49.
17. These criterion have been satisfied.
18. The Applicants were all incorporated pursuant to the OBCA, and their business and assets are exclusively in Ontario. As such, each of the Applicants are a “company” within the ambit of the CCAA. Given that each of the Applicants’ registered offices is located in Ontario, and the Business is carried out exclusively in Ontario, Ontario is the appropriate venue for these proceedings and this Court has jurisdiction to hear this application.
19. Pursuant to subsection 3(2) of the CCAA, “companies are affiliated companies if one of them is the subsidiary of the other or both are subsidiaries of the same company or each of them is controlled by the same person”. The Applicants operate as an integrated Company, and various of the Applicants are “affiliated companies” through their shared ownership by the Non-Applicant Parent Cos. Their indebtedness far exceeds \$5 million.
20. In order for the CCAA to apply, the debtor company must also be insolvent under the definition of “insolvent person” set out in the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, R.S.C. c. B-3, as amended (the “BIA”).
21. Courts have also recognized the expanded definition of insolvency provided in *Re Stelco*, 2004 CanLII 24933 at paras 25-26, which provides that a company is also insolvent for purposes of the CCAA if there is a looming liquidity crisis such that it is reasonably foreseeable that the debtor will run out of cash unless its business is restructured. Applied here, the Applicants are individually and as a whole insolvent. The Applicants are facing a significant liquidity crisis and cannot satisfy their liabilities as they come due.
22. Section 11.02(1) of the CCAA permits this court to grant an initial stay of up to 10 days on an application for an initial order, provided the applicant establishes that such a stay is appropriate and that the applicant has acted with due diligence and in good faith (s. 11.02(3)(a-b)). The primary purpose of the CCAA stay is to maintain the *status quo* for a period while the debtor company consults with its stakeholders with a view to continuing its operations for the benefit of its creditors.
23. A stay of proceedings will be appropriate where it maintains the status quo and provides applicants with breathing room while they seek to restore solvency and emerge from the CCAA on a going-concern basis. See *Century Services Inc v Attorney General (Canada)*, 2010 SCC 60, at para. 14.
24. The Stay of Proceedings will preserve the status quo and afford the Applicants the breathing space and stability required to advance their restructuring efforts, including their intention to negotiate and seek approval of a debtor-in-possession facility, to seek approval to appoint HCC as financial advisor, and to develop a plan of compromise or arrangement and/or explore other restructuring transaction alternatives. Additionally, it will permit the Applicants to continue to operate the Business as a going concern with minimal disruption. The continued and uninterrupted operation of the Business and the avoidance of uncoordinated and distressed sales or forced liquidations of the Properties will preserve value for the Applicants’ stakeholders and is in the best interests of all stakeholders, including the Lenders and the Applicants’ tenants.
25. In the circumstances of this case, that the Stay of Proceedings is in the Applicants’ best interests and the best interests of their stakeholders, consistent with the purposes of the CCAA, and appropriate in the circumstances.

26. KVS is a “trustee” within the meaning of subsection 2(1) of the BIA, it is established and qualified and has consented to act as monitor. KVS's involvement as the court-appointed monitor will lend stability and assurance to the Company's stakeholders. KVS is not subject to any of the restrictions set out in s. 11.7(2) of the CCAA.
27. In December, 2023, KSV Advisory Inc. (an affiliate of KSV) was engaged by the Applicants and has been working with the Applicants' management team, financial advisor and legal counsel since that time to assist them to prepare for this filing. During its engagement, KSV has obtained an understanding of the Applicants' Business. This knowledge will assist KSV to fulfil its duties as Monitor.

b) Extending the Stay to the Additional Stay Parties

28. The Additional Stay Parties purportedly provided guarantees in respect of substantially all of the First Mortgage Loans, Second Mortgage Loans, and Promissory Notes. The Applicants' defaults have already resulted in at least 27 claims being filed against the Additional Stay Parties. If the Non-Applicant Stay is not granted, it is conceivable that hundreds of claims could be filed against the Additional Stay Parties in connection with the Applicants' Business. The Applicants are concerned that this will occur within the initial 10 day period before the come-back hearing.
29. Section 11.04 of the CCAA provides that a stay pursuant to section 11.02 will not affect claims against third party guarantors of an applicant company, and section 11.03(2) provides that a stay pursuant to section 11.02 does not affect an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations or an action seeking injunctive relief against a director in relation to the company. So it is clear that, absent some specific order, the CCAA stay in favour of the Applicants under s. 11.02 would not protect the Additional Stay Parties who have provided guarantees.
30. Such a stay was denied in favour of a non-applicant director, ostensibly at least in part on jurisdictional grounds, in *Cannapièce Group Inc. v. Marzili*, 2022 ONSC 6379, but such stays have been granted in favour of non-applicants, including director guarantors, in other cases. See for example *Nordstrom Canada Retail, Inc.*, 2023 ONSC 1422, at paras 40-42; *BBB Canada Ltd.*, 2023 ONSC 1014 at paras 32-34 and *McEwan Enterprises Inc.*, 2021 ONSC 6453 at para 45, the latter being the most analogous case involving a stay in favour of a non-applicant director/guarantor.
31. In *Cannapièce*, the court was concerned about the breadth of the wording of the proposed non-applicant stay in favour of the director but was also able to make a procedural order that accomplished the same result in the one already existing proceeding against that director guarantor against whom there was an already crystalized claim.
32. I agree with the applicant that this case is more akin to the circumstances in *BBB* and *Nordstrom* and particularly *McEwan* where the third party stays were granted in complex situations in which non-parties could be facing significant distractions from their important restructuring work if they were having to respond to and fend off guarantee claims against them personally that overlap with the claims against the Applicants themselves. The Additional Party Stay here is limited to claims that relate to the Applicants or obligations of the Applicants. It only applies to Related Claims, being claims with respect to any guarantee, contribution or indemnity obligation, liability or claim in respect of or that relates to any agreement involving any of the Applicants or the obligations, liabilities and claims of and against any of the Applicants.
33. While “the issue [of non-party stay orders] is not free from doubt”, as Chief Justice Morawetz noted in both the *BBB* and *Nordstrom* decisions, he ultimately granted a stay in favour of certain non-applicant guarantors on an initial CCAA application, notwithstanding the language of section 11.04.
34. It is not in the best interests of the Applicants' stakeholders or the administration of justice for the Additional Stay Parties to be forced to respond to uncoordinated actions in respect of their purported guarantees of the very indebtedness that the Applicants are attempting to restructure under the CCAA. The Non-Applicant Stay is consistent with the “single-proceeding model” that favours the resolution of

claims within a CCAA process and avoids the “inefficiencies and chaos” that could otherwise result from uncoordinated attempts at recovery. See *Century Services*, at para 59.

35. This is an order that is within the discretion of the court to make when it is considered just and convenient to do so, and I find it to be so in this case. This jurisdiction is derived from s. 11 of the CCAA and further embodied in section 106 of the *Court of Justice Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.43
36. The plaintiffs and potential plaintiffs should only be minimally prejudiced by this temporary stay, which does not settle their actions or provide any release of claims against the Additional Stay Parties. If, however, there are objections to this continuing after the Initial Stay Period, those can be addressed at the come-back hearing.

c) The Appointment of Lender Representative Counsel

37. There are over 300 individual Lenders to the Applicants under approximately 390 First Mortgage Loans, 121 Second Mortgage Loans and 802 Promissory Notes. The Lenders are predominantly individual real estate investors. The Applicants seek the appointment of Chaitons LLP as Lender Representative Counsel. If appointed, Lender Representative Counsel may identify up to six Lenders to be nominated as Court-appointed representatives (the “Lender Representatives”) to advise and, where appropriate, instruct Lender Representative Counsel. Lenders who do not opt-out of Lender Representative Counsel’s representation pursuant to the Initial Order would be bound by the actions of the Lender Representative Counsel and the Lender Representatives, if any.
38. These Lenders are vulnerable stakeholders and creditors of the Applicants because there are so many of them and their individual claims may not each be material in the context of this CCAA, but are no doubt important to them given that they are mostly individuals (or private holding companies). The cost to them individually to retain counsel and obtain legal advice about these CCAA proceedings could be cost-prohibitive and the Applicants, the Monitor and the court will all be greatly assisted by the streamlining of positions that will be accomplished through the involvement of representative counsel.
39. Chaitons LLP, the proposed Lender Representative Counsel, is very experienced in this area and I have every confidence in their qualifications. These are among the relevant factors that I have considered in reaching the conclusion that the court should exercise its broad discretion under Section 11 of the CCAA and the Ontario *Rules of Civil Procedure*, R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 194, to appoint representative counsel for the Lenders in this case. See for example, *Canwest Publishing Inc.*, 2010 ONSC 1328 at para 21.
40. The only hesitation that I had was about whether the appointment of Lender Representative Counsel is needed and warranted at this Initial Order stage and whether it was fair to appoint the Representative Counsel that had been proposed by the Applicants without affording the Lenders to choose their own counsel. However, having heard and further considered the submissions of counsel for the Applicants, the proposed Lender Representative Counsel and the proposed Monitor, I am satisfied that an appointment is appropriate at this early stage, specifically to assist in the transmission of information and preliminary advice to the Lenders in advance of the come-back hearing which the proposed Lenders Representative Counsel will take on the responsibility for doing, including at a virtual town hall meeting (without the Applicants) that they plan to hold early next week.
41. The proposed Monitor is of the view that appointing representative counsel for the Lenders at the outset of these proceedings will also enable the Monitor to immediately put in place an efficient and effective communication plan, provide a single means through which the inquiries and concerns of hundreds of Lenders can be addressed and facilitate the efficient administration of these proceedings. In the proposed Monitor’s view, it is important that representative counsel for the Lenders be appointed at the outset of these proceedings rather than at the Comeback Motion due to the volume of inquiries expected to be received in the coming days should the Court grant the Initial Order.
42. Counsel have helpfully referred me to some other cases in which representative counsel were appointed at the time of the Initial Order in CCAA restructurings, for example: *Law Society of Ontario v Derek*

Sorrenti and Sorrenti Law Professional Corporation, Nordstrom Canada Retail, Inc., 2023 ONSC 1422 and Target Canada Co. (Re), 2015 ONSC 303.

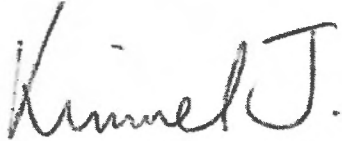
43. I take further comfort in the fact that any Lenders that do not wish to be represented may opt-out in accordance with the Initial Order. They also have full come-back rights in respect of this appointment so it is not set in stone.
44. I am satisfied that this relief is necessary and appropriate in the circumstances.
45. Counsel have advised that the specific paragraphs of the Initial Order dealing with this are taken from precedents in other cases in which representative counsel have been granted, tailored to the circumstances of this case.

d) The Administration Charge

46. The Applicants are seeking a Court-ordered charge over the Applicants' Property in the amount of \$750,000 to secure the professional fees and disbursements of the Proposed Monitor, along with counsel to the Proposed Monitor and the Applicants, and the Lender Representative Counsel at their standard rates and charges, incurred prior and subsequent to the granting of the Initial Order (the "Administration Charge").
47. Section 11.52 of the CCAA vests this Court with jurisdiction to grant an administration charge on notice to the secured creditors likely to be affected thereby in favour of, among others, a Court-appointed monitor, its legal advisors and any legal experts engaged by the debtor company. This Court has recognized that it is essential to the success of any CCAA restructuring "to order a super-priority in respect of charges securing professional fees and disbursements". See *US Steel Canada Inc (Re)*, 2014 ONSC 6145, at paras. 20 and 22. See also *Laurentian University of Sudbury*, 2021 ONSC 659, at paras. 49-50 and *Re Lydian International Limited*, 2019 ONSC 7473, at para. 28.
48. The Administration Charge reflects an estimate of fees for professionals whose services will be essential to the Applicants' restructuring efforts. Some of the beneficiaries of the Administration Charge have already engaged in a significant amount of work in connection with this CCAA application, and are expected to continue to provide restructuring and insolvency advice, developing a restructuring plan, preparing the Cash Flow Statement, and negotiating the DIP Term Sheet. The professionals will continue to play a key role in advancing the CCAA proceedings. Certain beneficiaries of the Administration Charge have modest retainers and significant arrears and the Applicants have no other means of retaining the beneficiaries of the Administration Charge, and each beneficiary is performing distinct functions in these CCAA proceedings to assist the Applicants with continuing and operating the Business in the ordinary course.
49. At this time there is no DIP financing and the Applicants have no cash flow with which to pay these professionals, so they require the Administration Charge as security for future payment of their fees and disbursements that will continue to accrue over the next ten days during the Initial Stay Period.
50. The Proposed Monitor has reviewed the past and projected fees of these professionals over the Initial Stay Period and considers the Administration Charge of \$750,000 to be reasonable and proportionate. It is approved.

Order

51. For the foregoing reasons, I have signed the form of Initial Order submitted to the court today. Aside from the specific points discussed above, the draft order is for the most part consistent with the form of Commercial List model order, with some changes that have become standard and accepted in these types of orders and some changes made to reflect the specific nature of the Business and the Applicants (for example, the Initial Order does require the co-operation of the loan originators to ensure that the Lenders all receive the CCAA materials and that the Lender Representative Counsel can communicate with them).
52. The comeback hearing has been scheduled before me on January 31, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kimmel J.", with a stylized, cursive script.

KIMMEL J.

TAB 6

CITATION: Cannapiece Group Inc v. Carmela Marzili, 2022 ONSC 6379
COURT FILE NO.: CV-22-00689631-00CL
DATE: 20221114

SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE – ONTARIO

COMMERCIAL LIST

IN THE MATTER OF THE *COMPANIES' CREDITORS ARRANGEMENT ACT*, R.S.C. 1985,
C. C-36, AS AMENDED

AND IN THE MATTER OF A PLAN OF COMPROMISE OR ARRANGEMENT OF
CANNAPIECE GROUP INC., CANNAPIECE CORP., CANADIAN CRAFT GROWERS
CORP., 2666222 ONTARIO LTD., 2580385 ONTARIO INC. AND 2669673 ONTARIO INC.

RE: CANNAPIECE GROUP INC, Plaintiff

AND:

CARMELA MARZILI, Defendant

BEFORE: Penny, J.

COUNSEL: *David S. Ward* and *Jennifer Quick* Counsel, for the Plaintiff

Robert Kennedy Counsel, for BDO Canada LLP

Clifton Prophet Counsel, for 2125028 Ontario Inc

John Peddle Counsel, for Carmela Marzilli

Vincent Pion Counsel, for Solid Packaging Robotik Group Inc

Robert McDonald Counsel, for 2726398 Ontario Inc.

Philippe Tremblay Counsel, for Solid Packaging Robotik

Russell Bennett Counsel, for certain unnamed investors

Clark Lonergan, trustee in bankruptcy at BDO, Canada Limited

Rory McGovern Counsel, to Cardinal Advisory Limited

HEARD: November 10, 2022

[1] On November 3, 2022, I made an Initial Order in this matter under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36. The relief granted in the Initial Order was limited to that which was reasonably necessary for continued operations during the initial ten-day stay of proceedings.

[2] At the comeback hearing on November 10, 2022, the applicants sought:

- (a) an amended and restated initial order:
 - (i) extending the stay of proceedings granted pursuant to Initial Order to February 3, 2023;
 - (ii) extending the scope of the stay of proceedings to include claims against directors and officers in respect of their potential liability under personal guarantees of corporate obligations;
 - (iii) approving a key employee retention plan and authorizing the applicants to make payments in accordance with its terms;
 - (iv) authorizing the Company to make payments to certain third party suppliers for pre-filing expenses which are necessary to facilitate the applicants' ongoing operations; and
 - (v) approving an increase to the Administration Charge to the maximum amount of \$500,000; and
- (b) a sale process approval order:
 - (i) approving a sale and investment solicitation process;
 - (ii) authorizing a stalking horse purchase agreement; and
 - (iii) approving the payment of a break fee, professional fee, and the deposit repayment.

[3] On November 10, 2022 I issued an amended and restated initial order and took under reserve certain aspects of the proposed sales process order, with reasons to follow. These are my reasons on all issues.

Sales Process

The Stalking Horse Agreement

[4] Stalking horse agreements are recognized by the court as a reasonable and useful component of a sales process. Here, the stalking horse agreement provides some certainty that the applicants' business will continue as a going concern. If the stalking horse agreement is not approved, the applicants will not have sufficient funds to continue operating, to the detriment of

their stakeholders. The baseline price in the stalking horse agreement will assist in maximizing the value of the applicants' business by canvassing the market to obtain the best bids available. Importantly, no better or other alternative has been identified. Despite the applicants' efforts, they were unable to source other rescue financing or purchase proposals, either inside or outside of the filing.

[5] The reasonableness of the break fee (\$175,000) is subject to the exercise of the applicants' business judgment so long as it lies within a range of reasonable alternatives. In my view it does. The Monitor is satisfied that the break fee is reasonable in the circumstances. It has noted, among other things, that: (a) the applicants were insolvent and did not have sufficient cash to continue beyond the week of the Initial Order without the DIP Loan that was provided by the stalking horse bidder; (b) the applicants made significant efforts to improve their financial situation prior to commencing the CCAA proceedings; (c) the stalking horse bidder required the break fee as compensation for its efforts; and (d) the stalking horse bidder was the only party showing any interest in acquiring the applicants' business, funding the stalking horse sales process and these CCAA proceedings. I accept the Monitor's recommendations on this issue.

The Sales Process

[6] Both by way judicial precedent and under the CCAA, a number of factors have been developed to assist in deciding whether to approve a proposed sales process. Having regard to those factors, I am satisfied that the sales process contemplated here is appropriate.

[7] A sale transaction is warranted at this time. The applicants are insolvent and unable to continue operations without restructuring the Company's debt. A sale of the business is the only option available at this time.

[8] The sale transaction will benefit a wide range of stakeholders. The stalking horse agreement sets a minimum price and the bidding procedures in the stalking horse sales process is designed to test the market by soliciting the best bids available, thereby maximizing value for stakeholders. Importantly, it is anticipated under the stalking horse agreement that, if the stalking horse bidder is the ultimate purchaser in the process, the purchaser will maintain the employment of the vast majority of employees.

[9] The senior secured creditor of the applicants, Carmela Marzilli, and the equipment financier, 2125028 Ontario Inc., are supportive of the stalking horse sales process and no other creditor has indicated that they object.

[10] There is no other, better, or viable alternative. The applicants, in consultation with their advisors, pursued a number of strategic initiatives to improve their operations and financial position. Despite their attempts, no other alternative to the stalking horse sales process has materialized. The stalking horse bidder is the only party who showed any interest in acquiring the applicants' business to date.

[11] The Monitor was consulted about and will administer the stalking horse sales process in consultation with its sales agent and the applicants. The Monitor is supportive of the process, including the stalking horse agreement acting as the minimum bid. The Monitor will also have

certain consent rights in connection with material decisions, including extending timelines, dispensing with bid requirements, and terminating the stalking horse sales process. The Monitor is not aware of any stakeholders who will be prejudiced by the stalking horse sales process.

[12] During the initial stay period, the applicants have communicated with various stakeholders, including secured and unsecured creditors, to provide information and answer questions. There is support from key customers and critical suppliers for a stalking horse sales process as well.

[13] On the evidence, the stalking horse sales process is the best and only value-maximizing option available to the debtor. The sales process is intended to avoid the value destruction that would follow from a cessation of manufacturing operations and customer order fulfilment. The process provides interested parties with sufficient time to evaluate the opportunity presented by the process and to submit a bid before the deadline.

Critical Suppliers

[14] The court may grant a request for approval of payment of pre-filing liabilities to critical suppliers. This is because one of the purposes of the CCAA is to permit an insolvent corporation to remain in business. The court has broad jurisdiction to make orders that will facilitate a restructuring of a business as a going concern. The Monitor supports the need for this order in the circumstances of this case.

[15] The applicants' request for an order granting approval to make payments to critical suppliers advances the goal of allowing the applicants to continue operating in the ordinary course of business throughout the stalking horse sales process. This will benefit the applicants' stakeholders.

The KERP

[16] The Court has jurisdiction to approve a key employee retention plan under s. 11 of the CCAA to make any order it considers appropriate.

[17] The purpose of a KERP is to retain employees who are important to the management or operations of the debtor company in order to keep their skills within the company at a time when, because of the company's financial distress, they might otherwise look for alternate employment. KERPs have been approved in numerous insolvency proceedings where the retention of certain employees was deemed critical to a successful restructuring.

[18] I accept that a KERP is warranted in the circumstances of this case. The eleven identified employees have senior level roles and responsibilities that are essential to ensure the stability of the business, enhance effectiveness of the sale process, and facilitate an effective restructuring. These key employees have specialized experience and unique knowledge about the operations of the Company. Their involvement in the sale process appears to be important to the success of the restructuring. The potential KERP beneficiaries may well seek other employment if the KERP is not authorized. The applicants developed the KERP with input from the Monitor and the Monitor supports the proposed KERP in this case.

Administration Charge

[19] The amount of the Administration Charge in the Initial Order was limited to the estimated professional fees and disbursements of the Monitor, counsel to the Monitor and counsel to the Applicants during the initial stay period. The applicants seek to increase the Administration Charge from \$250,000 to \$500,000 in order to remain current with the projected fees and disbursements of the professionals during the proposed extended stay period.

[20] Section 11.52 of the CCAA provides for the grant of an administration charge. On the evidence, I find the increase in the Administration Charge is appropriate. The cannabis industry is complex, highly regulated and subject to many statutory and regulatory restrictions and requirements. Successful restructuring will require the extensive input of the professionals who have been retained. The beneficiaries of the Administration Charge have and will continue to contribute to these CCAA proceedings and assist the applicants with achieving the restructuring objectives. Each of the proposed beneficiaries of the Administration Charge is performing unique functions without duplication of roles. The quantum of the proposed increase to the Administration Charge appears to be fair and reasonable and is in line with the nature and size of the applicants' business and the involvement required by the professionals. The Monitor, the DIP Lender, and the applicants' senior secured lender, Ms. Marzilli, are supportive of the increase in the Administration Charge.

Stay of Claims Against Directors

[21] The applicants seek to extend the Initial Order stay to include a stay of an action on guarantees of unpaid Company debt given by three directors. The stay is opposed by the plaintiff/creditor in that action. This was the only issue of controversy before the Court on this motion. The controversy arises in the following context.

[22] 2726398 Ontario Inc. is an unsecured creditor of the Company, having originally loaned the principal sum of \$7,000,000. As security for its loan, 272 received mortgage security over property as well as personal guarantees from certain officers and directors of the Company. This included guarantees from Ali Etemadi, Afshin Souzankar and Reza Khadem Shahreza. These three individuals are all founders, directors and senior officers of the Company.

[23] In August 2022 the Company sold the mortgaged property in Clarington, Ontario. However, the sale did not generate sufficient funds to pay the entire debt owing to 272. 272 agreed to accept the total sum of \$7,000,000 in exchange for a discharge of its mortgage security, without prejudice to its right to claim the balance of the debt owing from the Company and the guarantors. Following the sale of the property, \$7,000,000 was delivered to 272. 272 granted discharges of its mortgage security, leaving a balance owing to it of about \$815,000.

[24] On October 18, 2022, 272 issued a statement of claim in the Superior Court of Justice for payment of the remaining balance on its loan plus additional accrued interest. The Company and each of the guarantors are named as defendants in that proceeding. I was advised that service on all defendants has not yet been completed, and that no defences have yet been filed.

[25] The applicants started this proceeding on November 2, 2022. The supporting affidavit on the motion for the Initial Order acknowledged the existence of the guarantees given to 272, the shortfall 272 suffered when its mortgage security was discharged, and that 272's discharge of its mortgage security was without prejudice to its right to claim the balance outstanding to it.

[26] My Initial Order in this proceeding included a limited stay of proceedings against the Company's directors. The order stipulated that "*except as permitted by subsection 11.03(2) of the CCAA*, no Proceeding may be commenced or continued against any of the former, current or future directors or officers of the Applicants with respect to any claim against the directors or officers that arose before the date hereof and that relates to any obligations of the Applicants [emphasis added]" whereby the directors or officers were alleged to be liable for the payment or performance of the Company's obligations.

[27] The present motion seeks to extend the stay of proceedings by excluding the limitation contained in the "except as permitted by subsection 11.03(2) of the CCAA" proviso in the Initial Order. The issue turns on the interpretation of ss. 11, 11.02 and 11.03 of the CCAA.

The CCAA Provisions

[28] Section 11 of the CCAA provides that, "subject to the restrictions set out in this Act" the court may "make any order that it considers appropriate in the circumstances".

[29] Section 11.02 provides that the court may make an order staying all proceedings taken "in respect of the company".

[30] Section 11.03(1) states that an order under s. 11.02 may prohibit "any action against a director of the company" that arose before the commencement of the CCAA proceedings and that relates to an obligation of the company "if directors are under any law liable *in their capacity as directors* for the payment of those obligations [emphasis added]". Section 11.03(2) contains an exception to 11.03(1), however. It provides that s. 11.03(1) "does not apply in respect of an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations".

[31] Thus, s. 11.03 distinguishes between proceedings based on the director's personal liability under "any law" in his or her "capacity as a director" (s. 11.03(1)) and proceedings based on the director's personal liability arising out of a personal contract that he or she gave to guarantee the obligations of the company (11.03(2)): *Re Magasin Laura (PV) inc.*, 2015 Carswell Que 9722, 31 C.B.R. (6th) 168 (Que. Bkcty).

Analysis

[32] The applicants submit that my jurisdiction to stay the action on the guarantees arises out of the broad general powers under s. 11. They further submit that this jurisdiction was exercised in *McEwan Enterprises Inc.*, 2021 ONSC 6453, at para. 44(a), in parallel circumstances to those existing here.

[33] I am unable to accept these arguments.

[34] In my view, the CCAA, by its own terms, limits the general powers in s. 11 by expressly making the scope of those powers “subject to the restrictions set out in this Act”. Section 11.03(1) permits the court to extend the stay power in s. 11.02 (regarding claims against the debtor company) to the directors of the company, if the director’s personal liability arises under any law in his or her capacity as a director. However, s. 11.03(2) limits the power to order a stay by stipulating that s. 11.03(1) “does not apply” to an action against a director on a guarantee relating to the company’s obligations. The use of the phrase “does not apply to” in s. 11.03(2) means that, although the court *may* make an order in the circumstances covered by s. 11.03(1), the court *may not* make such an order in the circumstances covered by s. 11.03(2). Since the 272 action is a claim against the directors under a personal contract given to guarantee the obligations of the company, the provisions of s. 11.03(2) apply. Accordingly, I conclude that I do not have jurisdiction to order a stay in these circumstances. Such an order is prohibited by the express language of s. 11.03(2).

[35] *McEwan Enterprises Inc.* does not support the applicants’ argument. The passage they rely on in that decision makes it clear that the parties and the court were concerned with a guarantee given by Mr. McEwan in connection with obligations owed by another company, not the applicant debtor (a “non-filing party” which did not fall within the language of s. 11.03(2)). Although it may be the case as a matter of fact that Mr. McEwan also guaranteed obligations of the applicant debtor and that actions on those guarantees were also stayed, there is no indication that s. 11.03(2) was even raised with the court, much less considered by the court in its decision. It is, for example, (given Mr. McEwan’s overarching importance to the business -- he *was* the business and all stakeholders understood that), entirely possible that potential plaintiffs in any actions on Mr. McEwan’s guarantees were content to have those potential actions stayed, wagering that this was their only hope of recovery in the long run in any event. And, as para. 44(c) makes plain, the obligations which Mr. McEwan guaranteed were not anticipated to be impacted by the CCAA proceedings as they were assumed as part of the proposed restructuring transaction. I simply cannot find my jurisdiction to make the order sought in the face of s. 11.03(2) on a decision in which the point in issue was neither raised nor ruled upon.

[36] Accordingly, for these reasons, I decline to order a stay of the 272 action against Messrs. Etemadi, Souzankar and Shahreza.

[37] This does not end the matter, however. The stay was only being sought until the end of the sales process; that is, February 3, 2023. I agree with the applicants that Messrs. Etemadi, Souzankar and Shahreza will be heavily engaged in the restructuring effort until the contemplated closing of the sales process. 272 has not even completed the necessary service on all defendants. The proceeding is in its infancy. It is an action on a debt/guarantee. There is no suggestion of urgency. 272’s action has been brought for the benefit of one creditor. The sales process in these proceedings is calculated to benefit many stakeholders, including other creditors, employees and customers. While I have declined, for jurisdictional reasons, to order a stay of 272’s action, it is appropriate in these circumstances to make a procedural order in the 272 action that these three defendants shall have until February 10, 2023 (one week after the forecast close of the sales process) to deliver their statements of defence.

The Temporal Extension of the Stay

[38] The Initial Order granted an initial 10-day stay of proceedings ending on November 10, 2022. The applicants seek an order extending the stay of proceedings to and including February 3, 2023. I am satisfied that the requested extension is justified. The evidence supports the conclusion that since the Initial Order, the applicants have acted and continue to act in good faith and with due diligence to communicate with stakeholders and to develop the sales process, while continuing to operate in the ordinary course of business to preserve the value of their business. The cash flow forecast appended to the Monitor's First Report shows sufficient liquidity during the extended stay period to fund obligations and the costs of the CCAA proceedings. The extension of the stay is required to complete the sales process without having return to Court to seek a further extension. There is no evidence that any creditor will suffer material prejudice as a result of the extension of the stay. And, the Monitor supports the requested extension of the stay of proceedings.

Conclusion

[39] For the forgoing reasons, the orders sought are approved and granted, other than the request for an order to extend the stay of proceedings to include the action on Messrs. Etemadi, Souzankar and Shahreza's personal guarantees, which is denied (subject to the procedural direction outlined in my reasons).

Other Matters

[40] Mr. Russell Bennett appeared on behalf of certain unnamed investors who claim to have invested in some aspect of this business. No material was filed on their behalf. Mr. Bennett described concerns these investors have about the propriety of Miller Thompson and BDO representing the applicants in these proceedings. He sought a two-week adjournment of the applicants' motion to enable the investors to decide whether to file material and pursue the matter. In the absence of any material and, given the highly time-sensitive nature of the proposed sales process/restructuring, I declined this request.

Penny J.

Date: November 14, 2022

TAB 7

CITATION: Nordstrom Canada Retail, Inc., 2023 ONSC 1422
COURT FILE NO.: CV-23-00695619-00CL
DATE: 2023-03-03

SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE – ONTARIO 2023-03-01

RE: IN THE MATTER OF THE *COMPANIES' CREDITORS ARRANGEMENT ACT*,
R.S.C. 1985, c.C-36, AS AMENDED

AND IN THE MATTER OF A PLAN OF COMPROMISE OR ARRANGEMENT
OF NORDSTROM CANADA RETAIL INC., NORDSTROM CANADA
HOLDINGS INC., LLC AND NORDSTROM CANADA HOLDINGS II, LLC

BEFORE: Chief Justice G.B. Morawetz

COUNSEL: *Jeremy Dacks, Tracy Sandler, Martino Calvaruso and Marleigh Dick*, for the
Applicants

Susan Ursel, Karen Ensslen, for the Proposed Employee Representative Counsel

Brendan O'Neill and Brad Wiffen, for the Proposed Monitor

George Benchetrit, for the Directors and Officers of the Nordstrom Canada Entities

Aubrey Kauffman, for Nordstrom, Inc. (U.S.)

HEARD and

DETERMINED: March 2, 2023

REASONS: March 3, 2023

ENDORSEMENT

Background

[1] At the conclusion of the hearing on March 2, 2023, I granted the requested relief, with reasons to follows. These are the reasons.

[2] Nordstrom Canada Retail, Inc. ("Nordstrom Canada"), together with the other applicants listed above (collectively, the "Applicants"), seek relief under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C-36 (the "CCAA"). The Applicants seek a stay of proceedings (the "Stay") for the initial ten-day period (the "Initial Stay Period") under section 11.02(2) of the CCAA, together with related relief necessary to preserve the Applicants' business and stakeholder value during the Initial Stay Period. The Applicants also seek to extend the stay of proceedings to Nordstrom Canada Leasing LP ("Canada Leasing LP") and, for limited purposes, to Nordstrom,

Inc. ("Nordstrom US"). The Applicants and Canada Leasing LP are referred to collectively below as the "Nordstrom Canada Entities."

[3] Nordstrom Canada is a retailer which acts as the Canadian operating subsidiary of Nordstrom US. Nordstrom Canada entered the Canadian marketplace in September 2014 and currently operates 13 retail stores in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. Nordstrom Canada has experienced losses each year. Nordstrom Canada has only been able to sustain operations due to the financial support of Nordstrom US, which has provided Nordstrom Canada with approximately USD\$775 million in net funding through various means since inception. Nordstrom US also provides various other ongoing strategic support, and administrative services.

[4] Given Nordstrom Canada's financial performance and after considering available options, Nordstrom US has determined that it is in the best interest of its stakeholders to discontinue further financial and operational support for Nordstrom Canada in order to focus on its core business in the US. Nordstrom US has terminated its support and IP licensing arrangements with the Nordstrom Canadian Entities and replaced them with a Wind-Down Agreement (described further below).

[5] The Applicants contend that without support from Nordstrom US, the Nordstrom Canada Entities are insolvent and require the flexibility of the CCAA in order to effect an orderly, responsible and controlled wind-down of operations.

[6] The Applicants further contend that the requested relief is urgent, as the Nordstrom Canada Entities cannot operate without Nordstrom US's support, and continued support during the wind-down process is conditional on obtaining protection under the CCAA.

[7] The requested relief includes the approval of the Employee Trust, the appointment of Employee Representative Counsel, Court-ordered Administration and D&O charges in an amount required for the Initial Stay Period, as well as a Co-tenancy Stay of proceedings (the "Co-tenancy Stay") and a stay in favour of Nordstrom US.

[8] At the Comeback Hearing, the Applicants anticipate seeking certain additional relief, including the approval of an Employee Retention Plan. Additionally, the Applicants, in consultation with Alvarez & Marsal Canada Inc. (the "Proposed Monitor"), also plan to solicit bids from a number of professional third-party liquidators and to seek court approval in the near term to engage the successful liquidator bidder and to conduct an orderly realization process.

[9] The facts have been set out in an affidavit of Misti Heckel, President of Nordstrom Canada Retail, Inc., and President and Treasurer of Nordstrom Canada Holdings, LLC and Nordstrom Canada Holdings II LLC. In addition, the Proposed Monitor has filed a pre-filing report.

[10] The Proposed Monitor supports the position of the Applicants.

The Nordstrom Canada Entities

[11] Nordstrom Canada is incorporated pursuant to the laws of British Columbia. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nordstrom International Limited (“NIL”). NIL is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nordstrom US, a publicly traded company on the New York Stock Exchange. Nordstrom Canada serves as the Canadian retail sales operating entity.

[12] As of January 28, 2023, Nordstrom Canada employed approximately 1925 full-time and 575 part-time employees. Of these, 2,047 are full-line store and 310 are Rack store employees.

[13] Nordstrom Canada Holdings, LLC (“NCH”) is a US single member limited liability company wholly-owned by NIL. NCH, as general partner, owns 99.9% of Canada Leasing LP, the Canadian leasing entity. Nordstrom Canada Holdings II, LLC (“NCHII”) is a US holding company that owns 0.1% of Canada Leasing LP, as its limited partner.

[14] Canada Leasing LP is an Alberta limited partnership responsible for the Canadian real estate activities, such as leasing retail space from the Landlords, and subleasing the retail space to Nordstrom Canada.

Business of the Applicants

[15] Nordstrom Canada currently operates six Nordstrom-branded full-line stores and seven off-price Nordstrom Rack stores in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. These retail operations are conducted in facilities which are leased to Canada Leasing LP, as lessee, by third-party landlords (the “Landlords”) pursuant to leases (the “Leases”) and sublet by Canada Leasing LP to Nordstrom Canada pursuant to subleases (the “Subleases”).

[16] Ms. Heckel contends that Nordstrom Canada Entities’ business is dependent on Nordstrom US for administrative and business support services, including legal, finance, accounting, bill processing, payroll, human resources, merchandising, strategy, and information technology project support (the “Shared Services”). Nordstrom US formerly provided these Shared Services under an inter-affiliate licence and services agreement, effective as of February 3, 2019, between Nordstrom US and Nordstrom Canada (the “Licence and Services Agreement”).

[17] On March 1, 2023, Nordstrom US notified Nordstrom Canada that it would be terminating the Licence and Services Agreement in accordance with its terms, as well as the other agreements referenced above to which it is a party. Subsequently, the Nordstrom Canada Entities agreed to have the termination become effective immediately. Nordstrom US and the Nordstrom Canada Entities have entered into a new administrative services agreement effective March 1, 2023 (the “Wind-Down Agreement”) for Nordstrom US to continue providing Shared Services, as well as a license to use the essential IP, for the sole purpose of an orderly wind down under the CCAA.

Financial Position of the Nordstrom Canada Entities

[18] As of January 28, 2023, the Nordstrom Canada Entities had combined total assets with a book value of approximately \$500,784,000 and total liabilities of approximately \$561,024,000.

[19] Since 2014, Nordstrom Canada has experienced yearly losses across the majority of its 13 Canadian locations. For the year ended January 28, 2023, Nordstrom Canada generated revenue of \$515,046,000. As a result of its high occupancy and other operating costs, its EBITDA for the year ending January 28, 2023, was negative \$34,563,000, prior to taking into account intercompany payments.

[20] Most of the Nordstrom Canada Entities' losses have been absorbed by Nordstrom US through intercompany payments. However, Nordstrom US has resolved to discontinue this support, without which Nordstrom Canada cannot continue operating.

[21] The Nordstrom Canada Entities do not owe any secured indebtedness. Prior to the commencement of this proceeding, by virtue of amendments agreed upon by parties to a revolving Credit Agreement among Nordstrom US (as Borrower), Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, and certain other lenders, Nordstrom Canada was released from its guarantee obligations in relation to this indebtedness. The corresponding security interest granted by Nordstrom Canada was also released. Nordstrom Canada does not have any commitments under and has not granted any security in relation to the remaining debt agreements of Nordstrom US.

[22] Ms. Heckel states that since 2014, Nordstrom US has provided the Nordstrom Canada Entities with approximately USD \$950 million. Taking into account the distributions of USD \$175.6 million made by Nordstrom Canada to Nordstrom US, Nordstrom US has provided net funding to Nordstrom Canada of USD \$775 million.

[23] Nordstrom US, with the support of its advisors, has decided in its business judgment that it is in the best interests of Nordstrom US to discontinue its support of the Canadian operations. The Applicants contend that due to its operational and financial dependence on Nordstrom US, Nordstrom Canada cannot continue operations without the full support of Nordstrom US, including a licence to use Nordstrom US's IP.

[24] The Nordstrom Canada Entities believe that these CCAA proceedings are the only practical means of ensuring a fair and orderly wind-down. Additionally, Nordstrom US has indicated that it is only willing to continue providing the Shared Services and to permit use of the IP if the wind-down is supervised by this Court under the CCAA.

Requested Relief

[25] Having reviewed the record and hearing submissions, I am satisfied that the Applicants are all affiliated debtor companies with total claims against them in excess of \$5 million. I am also satisfied that Nordstrom Canada and the other Applicants are each a "company" for the purposes of s. 2 of the CCAA because they do business in or have assets in Canada.

[26] I accept that without the ongoing support of Nordstrom US, the realizable value of the Nordstrom Canada Entities' assets will be insufficient to satisfy all of their obligations to their creditors. I am satisfied that the Applicants in these proceedings are either currently insolvent under the definition of "insolvent person" in the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c.

B-3 (“BIA”) or the expanded concept of insolvency adopted by this Court in *Stelco Inc., Re*, 2004 CanLII 24933 (Ont. Sup. Ct.).

[27] I am also satisfied that this Court has jurisdiction over the proceedings. The chief place of business of the Nordstrom Canada Entities is Ontario: 8 of the 13 Nordstrom Canada retail stores are located in Ontario, while approximately 1,450 out of Nordstrom Canada’s 2,500 full and part-time employees work in Ontario. Further, during fiscal year 2022, store sales in Ontario totalled \$220 million, compared to \$148 million in British Columbia and \$77 million in Alberta.

[28] There are a number of examples of CCAA proceedings that have been commenced for the purpose of winding down a business. Recent examples include *Target Canada Co. (Re)*, 2015 ONSC 303, *Bed Bath & Beyond Canada Limited (Re)*, 2023 ONSC 1014, and *Bed Bath & Beyond Canada Limited (Re)*, 2023 ONSC 1230.

[29] Section 11.02(1) of the CCAA permits the Court to grant an initial stay of up to 10 days on an application for an initial order, provided such a stay is appropriate and the applicants have acted with due diligence and in good faith. Under section 11.001, other relief granted pursuant to this Court’s powers under section 11 of the CCAA at the same time as an order under s. 11.02(1) must be limited “to relief that is reasonably necessary for the continued operation of the debtor company in the ordinary course of business during that period.” In my view, the relief requested in this first-day application meets these criteria.

[30] Where the operations of partnerships are integral and closely related to the operations of the applicants, it is well-established that the CCAA Court has the jurisdiction to extend the protection of the stay of proceedings to those partnerships in order to ensure that the purposes of the CCAA can be achieved. (See: *Target Canada Co. (Re)*, 2015 ONSC 303 at paras. 42 and 43; *4519922 Canada Inc. (Re)*, 2015 ONSC 124 at para. 37; *Just Energy Corp. (Re)*, 2021 ONSC 1793 at para. 116; *Bed Bath & Beyond Canada Limited (Re)*, 2023 ONSC 1014, at para. 28).

[31] The Applicants submit that it is appropriate to extend the Stay to Canada Leasing LP. As the lessor of Nordstrom Canada’s retail premises, its business and operations are fully intertwined with those of the Nordstrom Canadian Entities, and any proceedings commenced against Canada Leasing LP would necessarily involve key personnel of the Applicants, who collectively hold a 100% interest in Canada Leasing LP. As counterparty to the store Leases, Canada Leasing LP is also insolvent and needs the breathing space provided by the stay to prevent the exercise of Landlord remedies during the pendency of the proposed liquidation sale.

[32] I accept this submission. In my view, the proposed extension of the Stay is appropriate in the circumstances.

[33] Many retail leases provide that other tenants within the same shopping centre have certain rights against the Landlords upon an anchor tenant’s (such as Nordstrom Canada’s) insolvency or cessation of operations. In order to alleviate potential prejudice, the Applicants request that the Court extend the Stay to all rights of third-party tenants against the Landlords, owners, operators or managers of the commercial properties where the Nordstrom Canada’s stores, offices or

warehouses are located that arise as a result of the Applicants' insolvency, or as a result of any steps taken by the Applicants pursuant to the proposed Initial Order.

[34] The Court's authority to grant the Co-tenancy Stay flows from the broad jurisdiction under sections 11 and 11.02(1) of the CCAA to make an initial order on "any terms that may impose." The Applicants submit that a Co-tenancy Stay is justified on the basis that, if tenants were permitted to exercise these "co-tenancy" rights during the Initial Stay Period (and beyond), the claims of the landlords against the debtor company would greatly increase, with a potentially detrimental impact on the restructuring efforts of the debtor company and that such claims would result in a multiplicity of proceedings which would be detrimental to an efficient and orderly wind-down.

[35] I have been persuaded that the Co-tenancy Stay should be granted in the circumstances.

[36] The Applicants also request that the Stay be extended (subject to certain exceptions related to the Cash Management System) to Nordstrom US in relation to claims that are derivative of the primary liability of or related to the Nordstrom Canada Entities (the "Parent Stay"). The Applicants submit that, among others, the Parent Stay would affect contractual counterparties with contracts or purchase orders involving Nordstrom Canada merchandise and concession operations entered into or issued by Nordstrom US on behalf of, or jointly with, Nordstrom Canada. The Parent Stay would also affect claims that arise out of or in connection with any indemnity, guarantee or surety relating the Leases. The proposed Initial Order further provides that any Landlord claim pursuant to an indemnity or guarantee in relation to either Canada Leasing LP or the Applicants shall not be released or affected in any way in any Plan filed by the Applicants under the CCAA, or any proposal under the BIA.

[37] The Parent Stay is being requested as a temporary measure designed to preserve the *status quo* and create breathing space during the Initial Stay Period, in particular to engage in good faith discussions with the Landlords. It is intended to prevent a multitude of proceedings being commenced in several different jurisdictions against Nordstrom US during this initial period with possibly inconsistent outcomes.

[38] The Court recently granted similar relief during the initial stay period in *Bed Bath & Beyond Canada Limited (Re)*, 2023 ONSC 1014. I note that it is the Applicants' intention to request a continuation of the Parent Stay for a reasonable period beyond the Initial Stay Period at the Comeback Hearing.

[39] I note that the Applicants submit that section 11.04 of the CCAA does not prohibit this relief. Firstly, the Indemnities are not "guarantees." Secondly, even if the Indemnities could be characterized as "guarantees", the opening words of section. 11.04 do not oust the Court's jurisdiction under section 11 to grant a third party stay in favour of a guarantor in appropriate circumstances.

[40] The Applicant submits that the Court has jurisdiction under section 11 to grant a third party stay and references *Target Canada* at para. 50, *McEwan Enterprises Inc.*, 2021 ONSC 6453 at para. 45, *Laurentian University of Sudbury* 2021 ONSC 659 at paras. 30–33 and *Lydian*

International Limited, 2019 ONSC 7473 at para. 39. The Applicant submits that section 11.04 of the CCAA does not prevent the Court from granting such a remedy in its discretion on the basis that the section is inapplicable, as the indemnities at issue here are not guarantees. In its factum, the Applicant also references that the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench in *Northern Transportation Company Limited (Re)*, 2016 ABQB 522 at para. 69 took a contrary view. The contrary view was also expressed in *Cannapiece Group Inc. v. Carmela Marzili*, 2022 ONSC 6379.

[41] This issue is not free of doubt and affected landlords have not been served and did not appear at this hearing.

[42] There are outstanding issues as between the Applicant and the landlords that have to be addressed in the near future. In an effort to encourage discussions as between the Applicants and the various landlords, I am prepared to grant the Parent Stay for the initial 10-day period prior to the comeback hearing.

[43] Ms. Heckel states that it is expected that the vast majority of Nordstrom Canada's employees will be provided with working notice of termination on, or shortly after, the commencement of these CCAA proceedings.

[44] Nordstrom Canada is seeking this Court's approval of the Employee Trust, which is to be funded by Nordstrom US. The Employee Trust is intended to provide Nordstrom Canada employees with a measure of financial security during the wind-down process.

[45] The Applicants submit that the Court in *Target Canada* exercised its CCAA jurisdiction to sanction the establishment of an employee trust established by the debtor company's parent for similar purposes.

[46] The Applicants submit that the Employee Trust is intended to ensure that these employees receive the full amount of termination and severance pay owing to them pursuant to employment standards legislation in a timely manner. Nordstrom US has a right of subrogation against Nordstrom Canada in respect of amounts paid pursuant to the Employee Trust.

[47] I am satisfied that the creation of an Employee Trust is fair and appropriate in the circumstances. The Employee Trust is approved.

[48] The Applicants seek the appointment of Ursel Phillips Fellows Hopkinson LLP as Employee Representative Counsel, to represent Nordstrom Canada's store-level employees and all non-KERP eligible non-store employees. Among other things, Employee Representative Counsel will assist with questions regarding Eligible Employee Claims and other issues with respect to the Employee Trust.

[49] I am satisfied that the appointment of Employee Representative Counsel is appropriate in these circumstances. Employees who do not wish to be represented by Ursel Phillips will have the right to opt out.

[50] The Applicants also seek authorization, with the consent of the Monitor, to make payments of pre-filing amounts owing to certain suppliers, including: (i) logistics or supply chain providers; (ii) providers of information, internet, telecommunications and other technology; and (iii) providers of payment, credit, debit and gift card processing related services. The Applicants believe that categories of suppliers are fundamental to continuing operations and the proposed liquidation sale and any disruptions of their services could jeopardize the orderly wind down, given the expedited timelines for the proposed Realization Process.

[51] For third-party suppliers or service providers other than those listed above, the Initial Order proposes permitting payments in respect of pre-filing amounts up to a maximum aggregate amount of \$1,000,000 with the consent of the Monitor, if, in the opinion of the Nordstrom Canada Entities, the supplier is critical to the orderly wind down of Nordstrom Canada's business.

[52] The Applicants submit that the Court has exercised its jurisdiction on multiple occasions to grant similar relief (See: *Target Canada* at paras. 62-65; *Just Energy*, at para. 99; *Original Traders Energy Ltd. and 2496750 Ontario Inc. (Re)*, 2023 ONSC 753, at paras. 72-74; *Boreal Capital Partners Ltd et al. (Re)*, 2021 ONSC 7802, at paras. 20-22). The Court in *Index Energy Mills Road Corporation (Re)*, 2017 ONSC 4944 at para. 31 outlined the factors that courts have considered in determining whether to grant such authorization, including (a) whether the goods and services are integral to the business of the applicants; (b) the applicants' dependency on the uninterrupted supply of the goods or services; (c) the fact that no payments will be made without the consent of the Monitor (which is a requirement under the proposed Initial Order); and (d) the effect on the debtors' operations and ability to restructure if it could not make such payments.

[53] In my view, a consideration of these factors leads to the conclusion that this requested relief should be granted.

[54] Pursuant to section 11.52 of the CCAA, the Applicants are requesting an Administration Charge in favour of the Proposed Monitor, along with its counsel, counsel to the Nordstrom Canada Entities, counsel to the directors and officers of the Nordstrom Canada Entities, and Employee Representative Counsel, as security for their respective fees and disbursements up to a maximum of \$750,000 (the "Administration Charge"), which amount covers the time period until the comeback hearing. The Applicants anticipate requesting an increase to \$1.5 million at the Comeback Hearing. The Administration Charge was sized in consultation with the Proposed Monitor and is proposed to have first priority over all other charges and security interests.

[55] In my view, the requested Charge satisfies the well-accepted factors originally established by Pepall J. (as she then was) in *Canwest Publishing Inc./Publications Canwest Inc. (Re)*, 2010 ONSC 222, at para. 39. Among other factors, the requested amount is fair and reasonable, and appropriate to the size and complexity of the businesses being restructured. In addition, the initial amount requested is tailored only to the needs within the Initial Stay Period. This relief is granted.

[56] In accordance with section 11.51 of the CCAA, the Applicants also seek a directors and officers charge (the "Directors' Charge") in the amount of \$10.75 million until the Comeback Hearing. The Applicants anticipate requesting an increase to \$13.25 million at the Comeback

Hearing. The Applicants submit that the quantum of the Director's Charge was arrived at in consultation with the Proposed Monitor and is proposed to be secured by the property of the Nordstrom Canada Entities and to rank behind the Administration Charge. The Directors' Charge would act as security for the Nordstrom Canada Entities' indemnification obligations for director and officer liabilities that may be incurred after the commencement of the CCAA proceeding. This charge would only be relied upon to the extent liabilities are not covered by existing insurance.

[57] In light of the potential liabilities, the continued service and involvement of the director and officers in this proceeding is conditional upon the granting of an Order which includes the Directors' Charge. I am satisfied that the Directors' Charge is necessary in the circumstances.

Disposition

[58] In summary, the Applicants' request for the relief set out in the proposed Order is granted and Alvarez & Marsal Canada Inc. is appointed as Monitor. The Comeback Hearing is scheduled for March 10, 2023.

Chief Justice G.B. Morawetz

Date: March 3, 2023

TAB 8

BRIEFING BOOK

An Act to establish the Wage Earner Protection Program Act, to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Bill Clause No.	Section No.	Topic
128	CCAA s.11.03	Director Stays

Proposed Wording

11.03 (1) An order made under section 11.02 may provide that no person may commence or continue any action against a director of the company on any claim against directors that arose before the commencement of proceedings under this Act and that relates to obligations of the company if directors are under any law liable in their capacity as directors for the payment of those obligations, until a compromise or an arrangement in respect of the company, if one is filed, is sanctioned by the court or is refused by the creditors or the court.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply in respect of an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations or an action seeking injunctive relief against a director in relation to the company.

(3) If all of the directors have resigned or have been removed by the shareholders without replacement, any person who manages or supervises the management of the business and affairs of the company is deemed to be a director for the purposes of this section.

Rationale

The reform is a technical amendment to re-order provisions of this Act, correct cross-referencing and correct for grammatical errors.

Present Law

11.5 (1) An order made under section 11 may provide that no person may commence or continue any action against a director of the debtor company on any claim against directors that arose before the commencement of proceedings under this Act and that relates to obligations of the company where directors are under any law liable in their capacity as directors for the payment of such obligations, until a compromise or arrangement in respect of the company, if one is filed, is sanctioned by the court or is refused by the creditors or the court.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply in respect of an action against a director on a guarantee given by the director relating to the company's obligations or an action seeking injunctive relief against a director in relation to the company.

(3) Where all of the directors have resigned or have been removed by the shareholders without replacement, any person who manages or supervises the management of the business and affairs of the company shall be deemed to be a director for the purposes of this section.

Senate Recommendation

None.