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SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
IN THE COUNTY OF THURSTON

AMERICAN PROPERTY CASUALTY
INSURANCE ASSOCIATION,
PROFESSIONAL INSURANCE AGENTS
OF WASHINGTON, and INDEPENDENT
INSURANCE AGENTS AND BROKERS
OF WASHINGTON,

Petitioners,

v.

OFFICE OF THE INSURANCE
COMMISSIONER OF THE STATE OF
WASHINGTON and MIKE KREIDLER, in
his official capacity as INSURANCE
COMMISSIONER FOR THE STATE OF
WASHINGTON,

Respondents.

NO. 21-2-00542-34

AMENDED PETITION FOR
DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE
RELIEF

COMES NOW Petitioners and allege as follows for their Petition against Respondents.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

1. The American Property Casualty Insurance Association (“APCIA”), the Professional Insurance Agents of Washington (“PIA”), and the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of Washington (“IIABW”), acting on behalf of their members, bring this petition to declare invalid a ban imposed by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (“OIC”) of the State of Washington and Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler (the “Commissioner”) on the use of consumers’ credit histories to determine rates, premiums, or eligibility for coverage (also called “credit scoring”) for all private passenger automobile, renters, and homeowners

1 a favorable business environment and a healthy insurance industry to better serve individuals
2 and their communities. IIABW represent hundreds of independent insurance agents and brokers
3 who serve the residents of Washington.

4 11. The OIC is an agency of the state of Washington. Subject to specific statutory
5 authority, the OIC oversees and regulates the insurance industry in the state. The mailing
6 address for the OIC is Post Office Box 40255, Olympia, WA 98505-0252.

7 12. Mike Kreidler is the Insurance Commissioner for the state of Washington. He is
8 named a respondent in that capacity.

9 IV. BACKGROUND FACTS

10 13. Insurers that choose to use credit history as a factor to determine insurance rates,
11 premiums and eligibility for coverage do so because credit history correlates strongly with
12 actual claims made by insureds and is predictive of future claims. Credit histories are not used
13 to ascertain a consumer's race or ethnicity as a basis for determining premium rates or eligibility
14 for coverage. In fact, insurers do not collect information about consumers' race or ethnicity.
15 Use of credit history as a factor in determining premiums and eligibility for coverage is
16 actuarially sound precisely because credit history strongly correlates with actual claims and is
17 predictive of future claims.

18 A. The Legislature Authorized Credit Scoring for Insurance Underwriting and 19 Rating Purposes in 2002.

20 14. The Commissioner has sought to ban the use of credit history since shortly after
21 he came into office in 2001. In January 2002, he supported a bill (House Bill 2544) that would
22 have totally banned credit scoring as a basis to deny, cancel or refuse to renew a policy for
23 personal insurance such as auto and homeowners. The Legislature rejected that bill and instead
24 passed Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2544, which enacted RCW 48.18.545 and 48.19.035—
25 statutes that authorize credit scoring in underwriting and setting rates, subject to certain
26 requirements and restrictions.

1 15. Both statutes created by ESHB 2544 provide that the Commissioner “may adopt
2 rules to *implement*” this section. And the Commissioner has in fact done so. *See* WAC 284-
3 24A-001, *et seq.* Among his adopted rules are 284-24A-010 and 284-24A-011 (specifying what
4 an insurer must tell a consumer about significant factors that adversely affect the consumer’s
5 credit history as well as significant factors that led to a decision to charge a higher premium or
6 to reject coverage); and 284-24A-045, 284-24A-050 and 284-24A-055 (detailing how an
7 insurer using credit history as a factor to determine insurance rates can show that its rating plan
8 results in premium rates that are not excessive, inadequate, or unfairly discriminatory).

9 **B. The Commissioner Attempted Twice More to Convince the Legislature to Ban the**
10 **Use of Credit Histories.**

11 16. In 2010, the Commissioner supported Senate Bill 6252, which would have
12 totally banned the use of credit history for any purposes, including underwriting or rating. The
13 bill failed, never making it out of committee hearings.

14 17. On January 11, 2021, at the behest of the Commissioner and the Governor, two
15 senators introduced Senate Bill 5010 which, if passed, would have prohibited insurers that issue
16 personal lines insurance policies (*e.g.*, private passenger automobile, renters and homeowners
17 insurance), from refusing to issue or renew a private insurance policy based upon an
18 individual’s credit history or credit information. Senate Bill 5010 also would have prohibited
19 insurers from filing rates with the OIC for personal lines that incorporated credit information.

20 18. Section 1 of Senate Bill 5010 contained a sort of preamble asserting that “[t]he
21 use of credit scoring to calculate rates for personal lines of insurance is unfair and has a
22 disproportionate economic impact on the poor and communities of color in our state.” This
23 theme of claimed disproportionate economic impact was recited repeatedly in support of the
24 bill.

25 19. On January 14, 2021, a public hearing was held on Senate Bill 5010 before the
26 Senate Committee on Business, Financial Services & Trade. Two representatives of the

1 Commissioner spoke at the hearing, John Noski, the legislative liaison for the OIC and Eric
2 Slavich, the OIC’s lead actuary for property and casualty insurance. Mr. Slavich testified that
3 he understood why insurers use credit history and aptly described the choice confronting the
4 Washington Legislature:

5 As an actuary, I understand why insurers use credit to help set their premium
6 rates. Actuarially, there is a correlation between credit scores and insurance
7 claims. But as legislators, you must decide if the rating factor is justified. Does
8 the correlation matter more than its impact on society?

9 As Mr. Slavich recognized, this is an archetypal example of the kind of policy judgments that
10 are the province of elected legislatures. Ultimately, the Legislature rejected the policy rationale
11 that the Commissioner urged, and the Commissioner’s bill failed to pass.

12 **C. Without Warning, the Commissioner Adopted the Emergency Rule.**

13 20. With no prior notice, and less than two weeks after expiration of the March 9
14 deadline for the Senate to pass Senate Bill 5010, on March 22, 2021, the Commissioner adopted
15 the Emergency Rule.

16 21. Unusually for an emergency action, the Rule creates two new provisions—WAC
17 284-24A-088 and 284-24A-089. The first provision contains the Commissioner’s “Findings”
18 in support of the Emergency Rule. In it, the Commissioner notes that insurers that use credit-
19 based insurance scores claim that credit scoring is a predictive tool to identify risk of loss from
20 a specific consumer (*see* 284-24A-088(2)), a proposition that neither the Commissioner nor his
21 lead actuary in testimony regarding Senate Bill 5010 disputes. The Emergency Rule (without
22 citation to actuarial studies or other evidence) states, however, that pandemic-related
23 emergency measures first promulgated in February, March and April 2020 by the President,
24 Congress and the Governor (in particular the federal CARES Act) limiting or suspending the
25 occurrence and/or reporting of certain negative credit events, have caused the credit histories
26 that credit bureaus are collecting and reporting to be “objectively inaccurate” for some
consumers. According to the Commissioner, this results in unreliable credit scores being

1 assigned to those consumers. As a result, says the Commissioner, the predictive value of a
2 consumer’s credit-based insurance score is no longer trustworthy, and currently-filed, credit-
3 based insurance scoring models are therefore unfairly discriminatory under RCW 48.19.020
4 (providing that premium rates for insurance shall not be excessive, inadequate, or unfairly
5 discriminatory). WAC 284-24A-088(3)-(7). The Insurance Code prohibits unfair
6 discrimination “*between insureds or subjects of insurance having substantially like insuring,*
7 *risk, and exposure factors, and expense elements, in the terms or conditions of any insurance*
8 *contract, or in the rate or amount of premium charged therefor*” RCW 48.18.480 (emphasis
9 added).

10 22. The first provision of the Emergency Rule also asserts that once the year-old
11 CARES Act consumer protections expire, a “flood” of negative credit history will be reported
12 that has not been accounted for in current credit-based scoring models. The Emergency Rule
13 states that the negative economic impact of the pandemic has disproportionately fallen on
14 people of color, and therefore, when the limitations are lifted, the credit histories for people of
15 color will have been disproportionately eroded by the pandemic. WAC 284-24A-088(8)-(9).

16 23. The first provision of the Emergency Rule also asserts that, without data to
17 demonstrate that the predictive ability of scoring models based on pre-pandemic credit and
18 claim histories is unchanged, the continued predictive ability of those models cannot be
19 assumed. The Commissioner says that this means that use of currently-filed, credit-based
20 insurance scoring models is unfairly discriminatory under RCW 48.19.020. The Commissioner
21 further says that because it is impossible to know precisely when the year-old, pandemic-caused
22 state and federal states of emergency will end, insurance companies must now develop an
23 alternative to the currently unreliable credit-based scoring models before the protections of the
24 CARES Act expire. Therefore, says the Commissioner, with no suggestion that an end to the
25 year-long states of emergency is imminent, it nevertheless is now necessary to *immediately*
26 implement changes to the use of credit scoring. WAC 284-24A-088(9)-(10).

1 24. In the second provision of the Emergency Rule, the Commissioner “finds” that
2 as a result of the broad negative economic impact of the pandemic, the disproportionate
3 negative economic impact of the pandemic on communities of color, and the purported
4 disruption to credit reporting resulting from the federal and state consumer protection measures,
5 use of credit-based insurance scores for private passenger automobile coverage, renters
6 coverage and homeowners coverage results in premiums that are excessive, inadequate, or
7 unfairly discriminatory under RCW 48.19.020 and 48.18.480 (broadly prohibiting unfair
8 discrimination in the business of insurance). WAC 284-24A-089(2). On these grounds, for all
9 policies effective or processed for renewal on or after June 20, 2021, the Emergency Rule
10 prohibits the use of credit history as a factor to determine personal insurance rates or eligibility
11 for coverage for private passenger automobile coverage, renters coverage, and homeowners
12 coverage. The Emergency Rule further requires that, by May 6, 2021, each insurer must file
13 amendments to their current rate plans for all insurance policies covered by the Rule to comply
14 with the Rule’s prohibition. WAC 284-24A-089(3), (7). The Emergency Rule took effect
15 immediately and provides that, to the extent it is adopted as a permanent rule, it shall remain in
16 effect for three years following the day the National Emergency declared by the President on
17 March 13, 2020 or the State Emergency declared by the Governor on February 29, 2020 ends,
18 whichever is later. WAC 284-24A-089(8).

19 25. By the Emergency Rule, the Commissioner has initiated what he hopes will be
20 an indefinite, three-plus year repeal of RCW 48.19.035. Acting under the guise of a claimed
21 emergency, he has taken this dramatic action (which is beyond the scope of his authority), in
22 the face of the Legislature’s rejection, based upon unsupported conjecture about the impact of
23 federal and state consumer protection measures (in particular, the CARES Act) on the reliability
24 of credit histories as a factor to determine insurance rates, premiums, and eligibility for
25 coverage. In sum, the Emergency Rule flouts the will of the Legislature, greatly exceeds the
26 Commissioner’s statutory authority, and lacks an evidentiary basis.

1 to try to persuade the Legislature to change course, he failed. He has now embarked on a new
2 path, attempting to accomplish by regulatory fiat, that which the Legislature refused to do. The
3 law simply does not permit this usurpation of legislative authority, and the Emergency Rule is
4 invalid.

5 33. APCIA, PIA, IIABW, and their members have no adequate remedy at law, and
6 a balancing of the parties' interests and consideration of the public interest favor injunctive
7 relief.

8 34. The conduct of the OIC and the Commissioner has caused and will cause
9 substantial harm to APCIA's, PIA's, and IIABW's members unless the Emergency Rule is
10 restrained and enjoined.

11 **COUNT II**
12 **(The Emergency Rule Is Not Authorized by RCW 48.02.060,**
13 **RCW 48.19.020, RCW 48.18.480 or RCW 48.19.080)**

14 35. APCIA, PIA, and IIABW restate and reallege the allegations in paragraphs 1-
15 34.

16 36. The Commissioner cites RCW 48.02.060 as statutory authority for adopting the
17 Emergency Rule. Nowhere, however, does this provision authorize the Commissioner to repeal
18 laws duly enacted by the Legislature. Moreover, this statute limits the Commissioner's
19 emergency authority to four discrete topics: 1) reporting requirements for claims; 2) grace
20 periods for payment of insurance premiums and performance of other duties by insureds; 3)
21 temporary postponement of cancellations and nonrenewals; and 4) medical coverage to ensure
22 access to care. The Emergency Rule does not pertain to any of these topics, and RCW 48.02.060
23 does not authorize the Rule.

24 37. The Commissioner also cites to RCW 48.19.020 as statutory authority for the
25 Emergency Rule. This provision merely recites the universal standard that insurance premium
26 rates shall not be excessive, inadequate, or unfairly discriminatory. This general, well-
established standard cannot reasonably be interpreted as authorizing the Commissioner to

1 wholly nullify by emergency edict statutes (RCW 48.18.545 and RCW 48.19.035) that
2 *expressly authorize* the use of credit histories in determining rates, premiums and eligibility for
3 coverage for personal lines of insurance—statutes that the Legislature refused to repeal just two
4 weeks before the Commissioner announced the Emergency Rule.

5 38. The Commissioner also cites, as statutory authority to adopt the Emergency
6 Rule, RCW 48.18.480, which again prohibits unfair discrimination “between insureds or
7 subjects of insurance having substantially like insuring, risk, and exposure factors, and expense
8 elements, in the terms or conditions of any insurance contract, or in the rate or amount of
9 premium charged therefor” This statutory description of unfair discrimination is consistent
10 with the long-standing understanding of the concept in the context of insurance. The
11 Commissioner himself has implicitly recognized, in the particular context of evaluating credit-
12 based insurance scoring models, the correct meaning of unfair discrimination, through his
13 adoption of WAC 284-24A-035. That provision provides that “*actuarial analysts*” of the OIC
14 will review insurers’ credit-based insurance scoring models for “[a]ttributes that may result in
15 unfair discrimination.” But the Commissioner nowhere refers to this provision in the
16 Emergency Rule.

17 39. Indeed, in attempting to justify the Emergency Rule and its total ban on the use
18 of credit histories, the Commissioner fails to demonstrate that all use of credit histories to
19 determine rates, premiums, or eligibility for coverage is unfairly discriminatory within the
20 proper meaning of that term in the context of property and casualty insurance. Instead, the
21 Commissioner seeks to unilaterally redefine unfair discrimination, contrary to the unambiguous
22 statutory definition set forth in RCW 48.18.480. There is no statutory basis for such a dramatic
23 expansion of the concept of unfair discrimination, so fundamental to insurance and its risk-
24 based pricing foundation, by the Commissioner. The Legislature rejected such an expansion
25 when declining to enact Senate Bill 5010.
26

1 actions taken by the President, Congress, and the Governor that he asserts have disrupted credit
2 reporting and thereby made credit-based insurance scoring unreliable. These are the
3 Governor's Proclamations 20-05 (declaring a state of emergency in Washington); 20-19
4 (placing a moratorium on evictions); 20-49 (placing a moratorium on garnishments); the
5 President's declaration of a National Emergency; and the federal CARES Act. The original
6 dates of enactment of these measures were February 29, 2020, March 18, 2020, April 14, 2020,
7 March 13, 2020, and March 27, 2020, respectively. Of these, by far the most important to the
8 Commissioner's rationale for declaring an emergency is the CARES Act's moratorium on credit
9 reporting.

10 47. The Commissioner has offered no reasonable explanation why these measures,
11 most over one year old, have abruptly caused an emergency justifying immediate adoption of
12 the enormously impactful Emergency Rule.

13 48. The Commissioner has failed to demonstrate that expiration of any of these
14 measures (none of which has a specified expiration date) is imminent. To the contrary, the credit
15 reporting moratorium in the CARES Act will not expire until 120 days after the President's
16 March 13, 2020 declaration of a National Emergency expires. There simply is no emergency.

17 49. APCIA, PIA, IIABW, and their members have no adequate remedy at law, and
18 a balancing of the parties' interests and consideration of the public interest favor injunctive
19 relief.

20 50. The conduct of the OIC and the Commissioner has caused and will cause
21 substantial injury to APCIA's, PIA's, and IIABW's members unless the Emergency Rule is
22 restrained and enjoined.

23 **COUNT IV**
24 **(The Emergency Rule Violates RCW 34.05.350(2))**

25 51. APCIA, PIA, and IIABW restate and reallege the allegations in paragraphs 1-
26 50.

1 52. RCW 34.05.350(2) provides that an emergency rule may remain in effect for no
2 longer than 120 days after the date of filing (here, March 22, 2021). Under the law, then, the
3 Emergency Rule nominally will expire on July 20, 2021. But its requirements ensure that its
4 effects will last well past that date, even if an identical or substantially similar new emergency
5 rule is not adopted in sequence.

6 53. Specifically, the May 6 deadline for insurers to file amendments to their rating
7 plans to comply with the Emergency Rule’s prohibition on use of credit histories means that,
8 for every line of insurance affected, new rating models must be developed and implemented by
9 that date. It will require considerable time, effort, and expense to make the required changes
10 and considerable time, effort, and expense after July 20, 2021 to unwind those changes. During
11 the unwinding process, insurers will either have to suspend issuing and renewing insurance
12 pending completion of the process or issue and renew policies using the less actuarially sound
13 methods developed to comply with the Emergency Rule. In this important way, then, the
14 Emergency Rule effectively will last well beyond the nominal July 20 expiration date.

15 54. Similarly, the Emergency Rule requires that insurers begin to employ non-
16 credit-based rating models for all policies new and renewing on and after June 20, 2021. This
17 means that, for approximately thirty days, insurers will be required to issue and renew policies
18 using these less sound models with terms lasting well beyond the July 20, 2021 nominal
19 deadline. This effect, too, then, will endure well past that deadline. Accordingly, the Emergency
20 Rule effectively violates the 120-day deadline specified in RCW 34.05.350.

21 55. APCIA, PIA, IIABW, and their members have no adequate remedy at law, and
22 a balancing of the parties’ interests and consideration of the public interest favor injunctive
23 relief.

24 56. The conduct of the OIC and the Commissioner has caused and will cause
25 substantial harm to APCIA’s, PIA’s, and IIABW’s members unless the Emergency Rule is
26 restrained and enjoined.

1 **COUNT V**
2 **(The Emergency Rule Is Arbitrary and Capricious)**

3 57. APCIA, PIA, and IIABW restate and reallege the allegations in paragraphs 1-

4 56.

5 58. The Emergency Rule is arbitrary and capricious because the Commissioner fails
6 to proffer any evidence to support the Rule. All the Commissioner offers is unsupported
7 conjecture that the federal and state consumer protection measures he cites have so disrupted
8 credit reporting that credit-based insurance scoring is no longer reliable and results in premium
9 rates that currently are excessive, inadequate, and unfairly discriminatory and will continue to
10 be so after the protection measures are lifted. Additionally, the Commissioner has offered no
11 evidence to support his assertion that when the measures are lifted, the negative economic
12 impact will be felt disproportionately by people of color. In the absence of any evidence to
13 support these bare assertions, the Emergency Rule is arbitrary and capricious.

14 59. The Commissioner's good cause determination under RCW 34.05.350(1)(a) that
15 an emergency existed is arbitrary and capricious. The Commissioner's claimed emergency was
16 artificial, his good cause determination was therefore arbitrary and capricious, and the
17 Emergency Rule is, therefore, invalid.

18 60. APCIA, PIA, IIABW, and their members have no adequate remedy at law, and
19 a balancing of the parties' interests and consideration of the public interest favor injunctive
20 relief.

21 61. The conduct of the OIC and the Commissioner has caused and will cause
22 substantial harm to APCIA's, PIA's, and IIABW's members unless the Emergency Rule is
23 restrained and enjoined.

24 **REQUEST FOR RELIEF**

25 WHEREFORE, APCIA prays for relief as follows:

26 (a) The Emergency Rule should be declared invalid and its implementation and
enforcement preliminarily and permanently enjoined on the following grounds: (1) the Rule

1 violates RCW 48.18.545 and RCW 48.19.035; (2) the Rule exceeds the statutory authority of
2 the OIC and the Commissioner; (3) the Rule does not comply with the good cause requirement
3 of RCW 34.05.030(1); (4) the Rule does not comply with the time limitation imposed by RCW
4 34.050.350(2); and (5) the Rule is arbitrary and capricious;

5 (b) The Court should award APCIA, PIA, and IIABW their costs and expenses,
6 including attorneys' fees and experts' fees, incurred in this action;

7 (c) This Court should grant such other and further relief as the Court deems just and
8 proper.

9 DATED this 8th day of April, 2021.

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12 DUANE MORRIS, LLP

CARNEY BADLEY SPELLMAN, P.S.

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14 By /s/ Damon N. Vocke
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17 *Attorneys for Petitioners*
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1 **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

2 The undersigned certifies under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of
3 Washington that I am an employee at Carney Badley Spellman, P.S., over the age of 18 years,
4 not a party to nor interested in the above-entitled action, and competent to be a witness herein.
5 On the date stated below, I caused to be served a true and correct copy of the foregoing
6 document on the below-listed attorney(s) of record by the method(s) noted:

7 Via electronic service to the following:

<p>8 Marta DeLeo 9 Suzanne Becker 10 1125 Washington St. SE, PO Box 40100 11 Olympia, WA 98504 laura.chadwick@atg.wa.gov marta.deleon@atg.wa.gov GCEEF@atg.wa.gov suzanne.becker@atg.wa.gov</p>	<p>Damon N. Vocke, <i>Pro Hac Vice pending</i> Duane Morris LLP 1540 Broadway New York, New York 10036-4086 dnvocke@duanemorris.com MBHolton@duanemorris.com RMLepinkas@duanemorris.com</p>
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12 DATED this 8th day of April, 2021.

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14 S:/ Patti Saiden
15 Patti Saiden, Legal Assistant
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