

# Assertion that PG&E discussed \$8B settlement is entirely false

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On Wednesday, the Daily Journal reported on a "split" among plaintiff lawyers over a "proposed PG&E fire settlement." ("Lawyers split on proposed PG&E fire settlement, co-lead counsel says," Oct. 31, 2018). The genesis of the article was the statement, "The global settlement would resolve all claims for about \$8 billion as opposed to \$15 to \$20 billion Singleton said plaintiffs could get if they prevailed in court."

The assertion that PG&E has discussed a proposed settlement of \$8 billion to globally resolve any or all actions brought against it by victims of the North Bay Fires is completely false. That falsity was easily verifiable by a simple call to lead counsel for PG&E or for the plaintiffs. The source of the statement is cited as Gerald Singleton, an attorney for certain plaintiffs who has never been authorized to discuss settlement with PG&E on behalf of the individual plaintiffs in the JCCP action. Mr. Singleton has never been lead counsel in the action and acknowledged his removal as a member of the plaintiffs steering committee in open court on Oct. 25 at a case management conference before the Judge Curtis E. A. Karnow.

We, three co-lead counsel for the individual plaintiffs, have had no direct settlement discussions with PG&E. What initial discussions that have taken place have related to first steps concerning *selection of mediators*.

No discussions whatsoever have occurred regarding any amount of money or terms of any potential settlement for individual plaintiffs. At no time was Mr. Singleton involved in any of these discussions.

The statement regarding an \$8 billion offer, reported by the Daily Journal as fact, served as the basis for the misleading headline "Lawyers split on proposed PG&E fire settlement, co-lead counsel says" No co-lead ever said that. Further, there has never been any proposed fire settlement. The statement attributed to Mr. Singleton as an assertion of fact was false. Why such a statement was made by him is incomprehensible to those in leadership.

As co-lead counsel, we are concerned that the victims of this tragedy will be misled by false and misleading reports that a settlement may be imminent or under consideration, or that clients claims are being negotiated through a secret process for resolution without their knowledge. There is no settlement under discussion. Suggesting otherwise is completely unfair to the victims.

*The authors are co-lead counsel for individual plaintiffs.*

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