

Westbridge LTD. Awarded \$1.9 Million Jury Verdict

FEBRUARY 27, 2018

Last Friday, after a week-long jury trial, Benesch client, Westbridge, Ltd. and its owner were awarded a \$1.9 million verdict on a counterclaim against New Sunshine, LLC and Australian Gold in the Marion County Superior Court. New Sunshine is the largest skin care products company in the United States. Over the last ten years, Westbridge has advised U.S. companies how to conduct business in the Pacific Rim of Asia.

In 2011, New Sunshine hired Westbridge to develop business strategy and introduce Australian Gold sunscreen products into the Pacific Rim market. All involved parties were aware at the outset that the process would take years to accomplish. Two years into the project, the beneficial owners of New Sunshine, John Menard and Steve Hilbert, had a disagreement that turned into a clash of business titans. Mr. Hilbert was removed from New Sunshine and Mr. Menard installed a Menard's store manager, Matt Cotton, to take over the multi-million dollar skin care company. Mr. Cotton cleaned house and terminated contracts with any business that had a relationship with Mr. Hilbert. Westbridge was one of those businesses.

Friday, a jury determined that the termination of the business arrangement with was unlawful and the jury awarded Westbridge actual and consequential damages resulting from that conduct.

The Benesch team was led by Peter French and included Monica Dabio, Andi Metzel and Patrick Fitzpatrick.