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Bentham IMF Helps Launch New Civil Justice Research Institute at the University of California, Irvine School of Law

Bentham commits \$300,000 to fund research leading to greater access to US civil justice system

LOS ANGELES (May 9, 2016) — [Bentham IMF](#), the pioneer and world leader in commercial litigation funding, announced it is helping fund the launch of a new [Civil Justice Research Institute \(the “Institute”\)](#) at the [University of California, Irvine School of Law](#).

Led by UC Irvine School of Law Dean, nationally renowned constitutional scholar [Erwin Chemerinsky](#), the Institute will study factors that limit access to America’s court system, including inadequate funding of state and local courts; the increased use of compulsory arbitration clauses favoring businesses and limiting judicial review; restrictions on class action lawsuits; limits on punitive damages and other challenges, among other issues. The Institute will serve as an academic and intellectual counterweight to the U.S. Chamber’s Institute for Legal Reform, an outspoken critic of litigation, generally.

The only litigation funder to support an institution pursuing policy initiatives in the United States, Bentham has committed \$300,000 over the next three years and is among the Institute’s largest supporters. Bentham will also contribute to the Institute’s growth by serving on its Advisory Board.

Ralph Sutton, Bentham’s Chief Investment Officer, notes that the goals of the Institute align perfectly with Bentham’s mission of expanding access to justice in a legal system distorted by the runaway costs of litigation. “Economic imbalances have an increasing impact on the outcome of civil disputes, frequently favoring parties with the deepest pockets rather than those with meritorious claims,” he said. Allison Chock, head of Bentham’s Los Angeles office added, “We’re excited to be joining Dean Chemerinsky and UC Irvine School of Law in taking a disciplined look at the economic distortions in our system. The Institute will also look to the remedies that can help level the judicial playing field for litigants.” Roman Silberfeld, a leading civil trial lawyer, executive board member of Robins Kaplan LLP, and member of Bentham’s U.S advisory panel, will also chair the Institute’s Advisory Board.

The Institute was announced a few weeks ago at UC Irvine School of Law. Founded in 2009, the school was the first new public law school created in California in nearly 50 years. The school has a strong commitment to public service, and all of its students are required to participate in legal clinics representing clients, with faculty supervision. The law school was given full accreditation by the American Bar Association in 2014, at the earliest possible time. In that short period, UC Irvine School of Law has been nationally recognized as a leading law school, including ranked No. 28 on *U.S. News & World Report*’s roster of “Best Law Schools.” Its faculty is ranked sixth in the country in scholarly impact, behind only Yale, Harvard, University of Chicago, New York University and Stanford University.

The Law School is led by Dean Chemerinsky, who is the author of eight books and more than 200 law review articles. He has also argued dozens of federal appellate and U.S. Supreme Court cases, and was recently named the most influential person in legal education.

“UCI is the most exciting and innovative public law school in the nation,” said Mr. Sutton. “Just as UCI has rocketed to prominence, the Civil Justice Research Institute is expected to have a profound impact on legal scholarship. Dean Chemerinsky is among the nation’s most respected experts on constitutional law, and the Institute is his vision.”

“We are grateful for the support shown by Bentham in the launch of the Institute – not just in its financial backing but in its outspoken endorsement of our charter,” Dean Chemerinsky said. “UCI Law’s Civil Justice Research Institute shares Bentham’s deep commitment to exploring how the doors to our civil justice system can be opened to all Americans.”

Bentham is the only funder to disclose details of its recoveries. To date, Bentham has funded to completion more than 180 commercial litigation matters that have generated over \$1.7 billion in recoveries. Clients utilizing Bentham’s funding have retained an average of 63% of all case proceeds over the company’s 15 years of operation.

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About Bentham IMF

Bentham is a publicly listed (ASX: IMF) company providing access to justice for individuals and companies. Bentham has 10 offices throughout Australia, the United States, Europe and Canada and provides funding to clients in jurisdictions including the US, Australia, the UK, Europe, Canada, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Singapore. Bentham has reviewed thousands of commercial cases in the past 15 years and enjoys a 90% success rate. *The American Lawyer* magazine has recognized the co-founders of the company among the “Top 50 Big Law Innovators in the Last 50 Years.”

For more information, please visit www.benthamimf.com.