

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

STELLA CRISTINA GOMES DE SOUZA,

Plaintiff,

-against-

WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA, INC.;
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF NEW YORK, INC.; and
THE GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S
WITNESSES,

Defendants.

Case No.: 7-25-cv-09458-NSR

**DECLARATION OF JASON S. GIAIMO IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR LEAVE TO AMEND THE COMPLAINT
AND STAY BRIEFING ON DEFENDANTS' MOTIONS TO DISMISS**

I, JASON S. GIAIMO, hereby declare under the penalty of perjury pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746 as follows:

1. I am a partner at the law firm of McLaughlin & Stern, LLP, attorneys for Plaintiff Stella Cristina Gomes de Souza ("Plaintiff") in this action and, as such, I am fully familiar with the facts and procedural history set forth herein.

2. I submit this Declaration in support of Plaintiff's motion for an Order: (i) granting Plaintiff leave to file her proposed First Amended Complaint pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15(a)(2); and (ii) staying the deadline for Plaintiff to oppose Defendants' pending motions to dismiss pending resolution of this motion.

3. On December 19, 2025, the Court set a briefing schedule for Defendants' anticipated motion to dismiss. *See* Dkt. No. 29. Pursuant to that schedule, Defendants served their motion to dismiss on January 21, 2026.

4. On February 13, 2026, Plaintiff submitted a letter to the Court informing the Court of her intention to file an amended complaint as of right pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15(a)(1). *See* Dkt. No. 37. On February 13, 2026, Defendants submitted a letter opposing Plaintiff's position and contending that amendment as of right was untimely. *See* Dkt. No. 38.

5. By Memo Endorsement dated February 17, 2026, the Court denied Plaintiff's request to file an amended complaint as of right, holding that the request was untimely because more than 21 days had passed since Defendants served their motion to dismiss. *See* Dkt. No. 39.

6. On February 13, 2026, in a good faith effort to avoid needless motion practice, Plaintiff provided Defendants with a copy of the proposed Amended Complaint and requested Defendants' consent to its filing pursuant to Rule 15(a)(2). Defendants refused.

7. Plaintiff has not previously sought leave to amend the Complaint in this action. No discovery has taken place in this action. No Rule 16 conference has been held. No scheduling order has been entered beyond the briefing schedule set forth in Dkt. No. 29.

8. Annexed hereto as **Exhibit 1** is a clean copy of Plaintiff's proposed First Amended Complaint. As the exhibits to Plaintiff's original complaint remain unchanged in the proposed First Amended Complaint, the version of Plaintiff's proposed First Amended Complaint being submitted herewith is being submitted without the exhibits that are attached to the original complaint. If the Court grants Plaintiff's motion for leave to amend, which the Court should, then Plaintiff shall file the proposed First Amended Complaint with the supporting exhibits.

9. Annexed hereto as **Exhibit 2** is a redline copy of the proposed First Amended Complaint reflecting the changes proposed to be made to the operative Complaint.

Dated: New York, New York
February 23, 2026

/s/ Jason S. Giaimo
JASON S. GIAIMO