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8	BEFORE THE	
9	DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS FOR THE BUREAU OF AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR	
10	STATE OF CALIFORNIA	
11	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 79/23-18907
12	COSME ANTONIO HERNANDEZ DBA	
13	HERNANDEZ SMOG 8602 Long Beach Blvd	ACCUSATION
14	South Gate, CA 90280	
15	Automotive Repair Dealer Registration No. ARD 302850	
16	Smog Check, Test Only, Station License No. TC 302850,	
17	and	
18	DAVID GUTIERREZ	
19	6630 Corona Ave. Bell, CA 90201	
20	Smog Check Inspector License No.	
21	EO 643478	
22 23	Respondents.	
24		
25	PART	ΓIES
26	1. Patrick Dorais (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in his official capacity as	
27	the Chief of the Bureau of Automotive Repair, Department of Consumer Affairs.	
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	(COSME ANTONIO HERNANDEZ DBA HERNANDEZ SMOG and DAVID GUTIERREZ) ACCUSATION	

- 2. On or about June 27, 2022, the Bureau of Automotive Repair issued Automotive Repair Dealer Registration Number ARD 302850 to Cosme Antonio Hernandez dba Hernandez Smog (Respondent Hernandez). The Automotive Repair Dealer Registration was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein and will expire on June 30, 2025, unless renewed.
- 3. On or about September 28, 2022, the Bureau of Automotive Repair issued Smog Check Test Only Station License Number TC 302850 to Respondent Hernandez. The Smog Check Test Only Station License was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charged brought herein and will expire on June 30, 2025, unless renewed.
- 4. On or about January 13, 2022, the Bureau of Automotive Repair issued Smog Check Inspector License Number EO 643478 to David Gutierrez (Respondent Gutierrez). The Smog Check Inspector License was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein and will expire on September 30, 2025, unless renewed.

JURISDICTION

- 5. This Accusation is brought before the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs (Director) for the Bureau of Automotive Repair (Bureau), under the authority of the following laws.
- 6. Business and Professions Code section 9884.7 provides that the Director may revoke an automotive repair dealer registration.
- 7. Business and Professions Code section 9884.13 provides, in pertinent part, that the expiration of a valid registration shall not deprive the director or chief of jurisdiction to proceed with a disciplinary proceeding against an automotive repair dealer or to render a decision temporarily or permanently invalidating (suspending or revoking) a registration.
- 8. Health and Safety Code section 44002 provides, in pertinent part, that the Director has all the powers and authority granted under the Automotive Repair Act for enforcing the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program.

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1	9. Health and Safety Code section 44072.6 provides, in pertinent part, that the expiration	
2	or suspension of a license by operation of law, or by order or decision of the Director of	
3	Consumer Affairs, or a court of law, or the voluntary surrender of the license shall not deprive the	
4	Director of jurisdiction to proceed with disciplinary action.	
5	STATUTORY PROVISIONS	
6	10. Business and Professions Code section 9884.7 states:	
7	(a) The director, if the automotive repair dealer cannot show there was a bona	
8	conduct of the business of the automotive repair dealer, which are done by the automotive repair dealer or any automotive technician, employee, partner, officer, or member of the automotive repair dealer:	
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10	(1) Making or authorizing in any manner or by any means whatever any	
11	statement written or oral which is untrue or misleading, and which is known, or which by the exercise of reasonable care should be known, to be untrue or misleading.	
12		
13	(4) Any other conduct that constitutes fraud.	
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1516	(6) Failure in any material respect to comply with the provisions of this chapter or regulations adopted pursuant to it.	
17	(b) Except as provided for in subdivision (c), if an automotive repair dealer	
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19	the specific place of business which has violated any of the provisions of this chapter. This violation, or action by the director, shall not affect in any manner the right of the	
20	automotive repair dealer to operate the automotive repair dealer's other places of business.	
21	(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), the director may suspend, revoke, or place	
22	on probation the registration for all places of business operated in this state by an automotive repair dealer upon a finding that the automotive repair dealer has, or is,	
23	engaged in a course of repeated and willful violations of this chapter, or regulations adopted pursuant to it.	
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25	(e) For purposes of this section, "fraud" includes, but is not limited to,	
26	violations of this chapter involving misrepresentations and all of the following: (1) Any act on emission that is included within the definition of either "certical"	
27	(1) Any act or omission that is included within the definition of either "actual fraud" or "constructive fraud," as those terms are defined in Sections 1572 and 1573	
28	of the Civil Code.	

completion of any transaction to which the records refer, or refuses to comply with a written request of the director to make the records available for inspection.

- (h) Violates or attempts to violate the provisions of this chapter relating to the particular activity for which he or she is licensed.
- 16. Health and Safety Code section 44072.10 states, in pertinent part:

. . . .

(c) The department shall revoke the license of any smog check technician or station licensee who fraudulently certifies vehicles or participates in the fraudulent inspection of vehicles. A fraudulent inspection includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

. . . .

- (4) Intentional or willful violation of this chapter or any regulation, standard, or procedure of the department implementing this chapter . . .
- 17. Health and Safety Code section 44072.8 states that when a license has been revoked or suspended following a hearing under this article, any additional license issued under this chapter in the name of the licensee may be likewise revoked or suspended by the director.

REGULATORY PROVISIONS

18. California Code of Regulations (CCR), title 16, section 3340.24, subdivision (c), states:

"The bureau may suspend or revoke the license of or pursue other legal action against a licensee, if the licensee falsely or fraudulently issues or obtains a certificate of compliance or a certificate of noncompliance."

- 19. CCR, title 16, section 3340.30, subdivision (a), states that a licensed smog technician shall at all times "[i]nspect, test and repair vehicles, as applicable, in accordance with section 44012 of the Health and Safety Code, section 44035 of the Health and Safety Code, and section 3340.42 of this article."
- 20. CCR, title 16, section 3340.35, subdivision (c), states that a licensed smog check station "shall issue a certificate of compliance or noncompliance to the owner or operator of any vehicle that has been inspected in accordance with the procedures specified in section 3340.42 of this article and has all the required emission control equipment and devices installed and functioning correctly."

- 21. CCR, title 16, section 3340.41, subdivision (c), states that "[n]o person shall enter any vehicle identification information or emission control system identification data for any vehicle other than the one being tested into the EIS or OIS. Nor shall any person enter into the EIS or OIS any false information about the vehicle being tested."
- 22. CCR, title 16, section 3340.42, sets forth specific emissions test methods and procedures which apply to all vehicles inspected in the State of California.
 - 23. CCR, title 16, section 3373 states:

No automotive repair dealer or individual in charge shall, in filling out an estimate, invoice, or work order, or record required to be maintained by section 3340.15(e) of this chapter, withhold therefrom or insert therein any statement or information which will cause any such document to be false or misleading, or where the tendency or effect thereby would be to mislead or deceive customers, prospective customers, or the public.

COST RECOVERY

24. Business and Professions Code section 125.3 provides, in pertinent part, that a Board may request the administrative law judge to direct a licentiate found to have committed a violation or violations of the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of the case.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

Undercover Operation #1

- 25. On or about November 2, 2023, a Bureau undercover operator (operator) took the Bureau's 2006 Toyota (2006 Toyota) to Hernandez Smog and requested a smog check inspection. At that time, the Bureau had modified the 2006 Toyota by removing the original catalytic converters and installing non-approved/aftermarket catalytic converters not legal for use in California along with tamper indicators to detect their removal. This modification caused the 2006 Toyota to fail the visual portion of a properly performed Smog Check inspection—for a tampered catalyst—that was performed on the modified vehicle in the Bureau's lab.
- 26. After arriving at Hernandez Smog on November 2, 2023, the operator met Respondent Gutierrez who performed a Smog Check inspection on the 2006 Toyota. The operator could see the inspection being performed from where he was seated and observed that

while Respondent Gutierrez connected the OBD Data Acquisition Device to inside the vehicle, he did not look under the vehicle to inspect the catalyst and did not open the hood to inspect the under-hood components. Following the inspection, Respondent Gutierrez told the operator that "it passed," charged the operator \$60.00 for the inspection, and provided the operator with a Vehicle Inspection report and passing certificate number. The operator then paid Respondent Gutierrez \$60.00 in cash and left the location. The Vehicle Inspection Report for the passing inspection of the 2006 Toyota indicates that Respondent Gutierrez selected "Pass" for the inspection category titled "Catalyst," indicating he had visually inspected the catalytic converters.

27. On or about December 1, 2023, the Bureau re-inspected the 2006 Toyota and confirmed that it was still not in a condition to pass a properly performed California Smog Check inspection, as it again failed the visual portion of the Smog Check inspection due to the installed non-approved catalytic converters. Additionally, the re-inspection revealed that the tamper indicator previously installed by the Bureau remained in place indicating that the non-approved catalytic converters were never removed or disturbed.

Undercover Operation #2

28. On or about February 22, 2024, the operator took the Bureau's 2007 Dodge (2007 Dodge) to Hernandez Smog and requested a smog check inspection. At that time, the Bureau had modified the 2007 Dodge by removing both three-way catalytic converters, installing non-approved spacers between each downstream heated oxygen sensor, and adding non-approved exhaust pipes. The Bureau had also installed a non-approved open element air filter with a non-approved homemade air duct and installed a new crankcase ventilation hose with a non-approved add-on breather filter. The Bureau had installed tamper indicators to detect removal of the non-approved exhaust pipes, air duct, crankcase ventilation hose, and breather filter. The Bureau had also relocated the inlet air temperature (IAT) sensor such that it was no longer installed in accordance with the vehicle manufacturer's original configuration. The modifications made by the Bureau are commonly found on vehicles used for street racing, and they caused the 2007 Dodge to fail the visual portion of a properly performed Smog Check inspection that was performed on the modified vehicle in the Bureau's lab.

- 29. After the operator arrived at Hernandez Smog on February 22, 2024, he informed Respondent Gutierrez that he needed a smog inspection on the 2007 Dodge. After beginning the smog inspection, Respondent Gutierrez opened the hood of the 2007 Dodge, pointed to the air intake setup, and said to the operator that everything was fine. Respondent Gutierrez then entered the vehicle information into the test analyzer which informed him that the 2007 Dodge had been previously tested and failed for tampered emission components. The operator asked Respondent Gutierrez what was tampered on the vehicle, and Respondent Gutierrez pointed to the air intake pipe. The operator then told Respondent Gutierrez to "hook it up" and Respondent Gutierrez stated that he normally gets at least "\$200.00 to pass a vehicle like this." The operator then offered \$200.00 in cash to Respondent Gutierrez if he would pass the vehicle. Respondent Gutierrez took the money and provided the operator with a passing Vehicle Inspection Report for the 2007 Dodge which indicated that Respondent Gutierrez had selected "Pass" indicating he had visually inspected the catalytic converters and "Pass" for the crankcase emissions controls when the positive crankcase ventilation system and air intake were in a tampered state.
- 30. On or about February 27, 2024, the Bureau re-inspected the 2007 Dodge and confirmed that it was still not in a condition to pass a properly performed California Smog Check inspection, as it again failed the visual portion of the Smog Check inspection due to both missing three-way catalytic converters, both non-approved add-on spacers, the non-approved open element air filter, the non-approved air duct, the non-approved add-on breather filter, and the relocated IAT sensor. Additionally, the re-inspection revealed that the tamper indicators previously installed by the Bureau remained in place indicating that the non-approved exhaust pipes, non-approved air duct, crankcase ventilation hose, and non-approved add-on breather filter were never removed or disturbed while out of Bureau custody.

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FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Untrue or Misleading Statements)

31. Respondent Hernandez's Automotive Repair Dealer Registration is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 9884.7, subdivision (a)(1), in that he made or authorized statements which he knew or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known to be untrue or misleading, by issuing electronic smog certificates of compliance for the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge, certifying that those vehicles were in compliance with applicable laws and regulations when, in fact, those vehicles had not been properly inspected. Respondent did not inspect the vehicles as required by Health and Safety Code section 44012. Complainant hereby incorporates paragraphs 25 through 30, above, as though set forth fully herein.

SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Fraud)

32. Respondent Hernandez's Automotive Repair Dealer Registration is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 9884.7, subdivision (a)(4), in that he committed acts that constitute fraud by issuing electronic smog certificates of compliance for the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge without performing a bona fide inspection of the emission control devices and systems on those vehicles, thereby depriving the People of the State of California of the protection afforded by the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program. Complainant hereby incorporates paragraphs 25 through 30, above, as though set forth fully herein.

THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Material Violation of Automotive Repair Act)

33. Respondent Hernandez's Automotive Repair Dealer Registration is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 9884.7, subdivision (a)(6), in that he failed in a material respect to comply with the provisions of this chapter or regulations adopted pursuant to it when he issued electronic smog certificates of compliance for the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge without performing a bona fide inspection of the emission control

devices and systems on those vehicles, thereby depriving the People of the State of California of the protection afforded by the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program. Complainant hereby incorporates paragraphs 25 through 30, above, as though set forth fully herein.

FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Violations of the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program)

- 34. Respondent Hernandez's Smog Check Test Only Station License is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 44072.2, subdivision (a), in that he failed to comply with the following sections of that Code:
- a. <u>Section 44012</u>: Respondent failed to ensure that the emission control tests were performed on the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge in accordance with procedures prescribed by the department.
- b. Section 44015, subdivision (b): Respondent issued electronic smog certificates of compliance to the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge without ensuring that those vehicles were properly tested and inspected to determine if they were in compliance with Health and Safety Code section 44012.

Complainant hereby incorporates paragraphs 25 through 30, above, as though set forth fully herein.

FIFTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Failure to Comply with Regulations Pursuant to the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program)

- 35. Respondent Hernandez's Smog Check Test Only Station License is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 44072.2, subdivision (c), in that he failed to comply with provisions of CCR, title 16, as follows:
- a. <u>Section 3340.24, subdivision (c)</u>: Respondent falsely or fraudulently issued electronic smog certificates of compliance for the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge.
- b. <u>Section 3340.30, subdivision (a)</u>: Respondent failed to inspect and test the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge in accordance with Health and Safety Code sections 44012 and 44035, and CCR, title 16, section 3340.42.

- c. <u>Section 3340.35, subdivision (c)</u>: Respondent issued electronic smog certificates of compliance for the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge even though those vehicles had not been inspected in accordance with section 3340.42.
- d. <u>Section 3340.42</u>: Respondent failed to ensure that the required smog tests were conducted on the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge in accordance with the Bureau's specifications.
- e. <u>Section 3373</u>: Respondent issued passing VIRs and electronic smog certificates of compliance to the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge, falsely indicating those vehicles as being in compliance with applicable laws and regulations when, in fact, the vehicles had not been properly inspected.

Complainant hereby incorporates paragraphs 25 through 30, above, as though set forth fully herein.

SIXTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Dishonesty, Fraud or Deceit)

36. Respondent Hernandez's Smog Check Test Only Station License is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Health and Safety Code sections 44072.2, subdivision (d), and 44072.10, subdivision (c), in that he committed dishonest, fraudulent, or deceitful acts whereby another was injured by issuing electronic smog certificates of compliance for the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge without performing a bona fide inspection of the emission control devices and systems on those vehicles, thereby depriving the People of the State of California of the protection afforded by the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program. Complainant hereby incorporates paragraphs 25 through 30, above, as though set forth fully herein.

SEVENTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Violations of the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program)

37. Respondent Gutierrez's Smog Check Inspector License is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 44072.2, subdivision (a), in that he failed to comply with the following sections of that code:

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a.

Section 44012: Respondent failed to ensure that the emission control tests were

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NINTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Dishonesty, Fraud or Deceit)

39. Respondent Gutierrez's Smog Check Inspector License is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to Health and Safety Code sections 44072.2, subdivision (d), and 44072.10, subdivision (c), in that he committed dishonest, fraudulent, or deceitful acts whereby another was injured by issuing an electronic smog certificates of compliance for the 2006 Toyota and the 2007 Dodge without performing bona fide inspections of the emission control devices and systems on those vehicles, thereby depriving the People of the State of California of the protection afforded by the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program. Complainant hereby incorporates paragraphs 25 through 30, above, as though set forth fully herein.

OTHER MATTERS

- 40. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 9884.7, subdivision (c), the Director may suspend, revoke, or place on probation the registration for all places of business operated in this state by Cosme Antonio Hernandez, upon a finding that he has, or is, engaged in a course of repeated and willful violations of the laws and regulations pertaining to an automotive repair dealer.
- 41. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 44072.8, if Smog Check Test Only Station License No. TC 302850, issued to Respondent Cosme Antonio Hernandez, is revoked or suspended, any additional license issued under Chapter 5 of Part 5 of Division 26 of the Health and Safety Code in the name of said licensee may be likewise revoked or suspended by the director.
- 42. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 44072.8, if Smog Check Inspector License No. EO 643478, issued to Respondent David Gutierrez, is revoked or suspended, any additional license issued under Chapter 5 of Part 5 of Division 26 of the Health and Safety Code in the name of said licensee may be likewise revoked or suspended by the director.

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