

## For Immediate Release

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### **Wrongful Death Suit Filed Against National Restaurant Chains RA Sushi and Benihana Following Fatal Auto Accident**

*Benihana subsidiary accused of serving alcohol to intoxicated underage driver involved in fatal car accident after leaving restaurant*

**LOS ANGELES** – A complaint for wrongful death and violation of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act was filed today in Los Angeles Superior Court against national restaurant chain RA Sushi and its parent company, Benihana Inc., by the husband of a woman killed last summer after an intoxicated underage driver collided with her vehicle.

Drean Hanley, 58, a vice president at Wells Fargo and a resident of the Silver Lake area of Los Angeles, was driving home from work on Interstate 710 on the evening of July 2, 2009, when Paul Kim collided with her vehicle as he was traveling at speeds believed to be in excess of 100 miles per hour. Mr. Kim, who had just turned 20 two weeks before the incident, was driving home from the RA Sushi restaurant in Torrance, where he was repeatedly served alcoholic beverages even though he was underage and visibly intoxicated. As Mr. Kim exited RA Sushi, employees of the restaurant did not attempt to stop him from driving his car, nor did they offer to arrange for a taxi to transport him home safely.

The impact of the collision was severe enough to break Ms. Hanley's spine, paralyzing her. She died from her severe injuries one week later. Mr. Kim has been charged with vehicular homicide and is out of jail on bail while awaiting trial.

The suit, brought on behalf of Ms. Hanley's husband of 40 years, Albert Chris Hanley, accuses RA Sushi and Benihana of fostering an irresponsible and raucous atmosphere where, according to promotional materials, patrons can "toss back a few" while "partying in the RA." Many of the pictures on the RA Sushi Web site depict young patrons consuming alcoholic beverages in a place "where Iron Chef meets Girls Gone Wild." The suit contends that the defendants were aware of the dangerous consequences of such advertising and its impact in attracting underage patrons.

"Drean was cherished as a companion by Albert Hanley, a pillar of her community, and a highly respected business executive," said Joshua Wayser, a partner in the Los Angeles office of Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP, who represents Mr. Hanley in this matter. "While Paul Kim and his reckless behavior were responsible for her tragic death, RA Sushi and its parent, Benihana, are just as culpable, as it was their unconscionable actions—furnishing a minor with alcohol, continuing to do so when he

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was visibly intoxicated, and sending him home behind the wheel of his own car, knowing his impaired state—that led to the circumstances of that fateful evening.”

Mr. Wayser continued: “This case is about corporate responsibility. RA Sushi had a responsibility to protect both its patrons and the public, but through either corporate greed or reckless ignorance, failed to do so. We are asking that the court send a message to all establishments that serve alcohol to minors that there are severe consequences to their actions.”

The suit further alleges that RA Sushi and Benihana did not properly train their employees to prevent underage drinking or to stop serving obviously intoxicated patrons. Serving alcohol to obviously intoxicated minors violates California’s Alcoholic Beverage Control Act.

The case is *Albert Chris Hanley v. RA Sushi Torrance Corp.; RA Sushi Holding Corp; Benihana Inc.* A copy of the complaint is available upon request.

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