1	Damon D. Mircheff (State Bar No. 21625' dmircheff@rutan.com	7)
2	Samantha Goates (State Bar No. 310610) sgoates@rutan.com	
3	RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP 611 Anton Boulevard, Suite 1400	
4	Costa Mesa, California 92626-1931	
5	Telephone: 714-641-3405 Facsimile: 714-546-9035	
6	Attorneys for Plaintiff Judith Badgley, as Executor of the Estate of Patricia Yoder	
7	the Estate of Patricia Yoder	
8	UNITED STATES	DISTRICT COURT
9	NORTHERN DISTRI	CT OF CALIFORNIA
10	OAKLANE	DIVISION
11		
12	JUDITH BADGLEY, as Executor of the Estate of Patricia Yoder, an individual,	Case No. 4:17-cv-00877-HSG Hon. Haywood S. Gilliam, Jr.
13	Plaintiff,	PLAINTIFF JUDITH BADGLEY'S
14	V.	NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR SUMMARY
15	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	JUDGMENT; MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES
16	Defendant.	[DECLARATIONS OF JUDITH
17	、 、	BADGLEY, PAMELA YODER, JEFFREY HIPSHMAN AND DAMON
18		MIRCHEFF; REQUEST FOR
19		JUDICIAL NOTICE; AND [PROPOSED] ORDER FILED CONCURRENTLY]
20		DATE: January 4, 2018
21		TIME: 2:00 p.m. DEPT: 2
22		Action filed: Jan. 23, 2017
23		Trial date: April 9, 2018
24		
25	///	
26	///	
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28	///	
Rutan & Tucker, LLP attorneys at law	1060/012420 0005	CASE NO. 4:17-cv-00877-HSG PLAINTIFF'S NOTICE OF MOTION AND

1069/013439-0005 11667011.5 a11/20/17

MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

TO THE HONORABLE COURT, ALL PARTIES AND THEIR COUNSEL OF RECORD:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on January 4, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. in 3 Courtroom 2 of the above-entitled court located at 1301 Clay Street, Oakland, 4 California, plaintiff Judith Badgley, as Executor of the Estate of Patricia Yoder 5 ("Plaintiff"), will and hereby does move this Court for summary judgment against 6 7 defendant United States of America ("Defendant") on Plaintiff's claim for a refund 8 of estate taxes paid on the Estate of Patricia Yoder. Plaintiff brings this Motion pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 56, and the Northern District Civil 9 Local Rules 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 7-5, and 56-1. This Motion is based on the grounds that 10 there is no triable issue of material fact, and that summary judgment is appropriate 11 as a matter of law on Plaintiff's claim for a refund, pursuant to 26 U.S.C. section 12 7422,¹ for the overpayment of \$3,810,004 in estate taxes (out of a total of 13 \$11,206,694 in estate taxes paid). Specifically, Plaintiff's Motion is based on the 14

15 grounds that:

The Grantor Retained Annuity Trust ("GRAT") that decedent Patricia
 Yoder ("Patricia") created in 1998 complied with section 2702(a)(2) in that the fixed
 annuity the GRAT paid was a "qualified interest" as defined in section 2702(b)(1);²

Patricia did not retain the right to the "income from, the property" that
 Patricia transferred to her GRAT within the meaning of section 2036(a)(1), a section
 of the Internal Revenue Code that dictates whether the trust corpus, and how much
 of the corpus, is included in a decedent's gross estate;

- 3. Patricia did not retain a right to "possession or enjoyment of the
 property" that Patricia transferred to her GRAT, within the meaning of Section
 2036(a)(1);
- 26

²⁷ Unless otherwise noted, all section references are to the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, Title 26 of the United States Code.

^{28 &}lt;sup>2</sup> Defendant does not dispute that Patricia's annuity was a "qualified interest" as defined in section 2702(b)(1).

4. The Internal Revenue Service's relevant regulation, 26 C.F.R. section
 20.2036-1, in which the IRS interprets section 2036(a)(1), is overly broad and
 invalid *as applied to a GRAT like Patricia Yoder's GRAT;* and

5. Because section 2036(a)(1) did not apply to Patricia's GRAT (i.e.,
Patricia did not retain the right to income from the property or possession or
enjoyment of the property after she transferred it to her GRAT), the estate tax paid
for Patricia's estate in 2013 included the overpayment of \$3,810,004 in tax (because
of the inclusion of the full date-of-death value of the GRAT's corpus in her gross
estate), which the IRS failed to refund in response to the June 2016 Claim for
Refund.

For these reasons, Plaintiff is entitled to summary judgment awarding her a
refund of \$3,810,004 in estate tax, plus interest on that principal sum as provided by
law from January 30, 2014.

14 Plaintiff's Motion is based upon this Notice of Motion and Motion, and the attached Memorandum of Points and Authorities; the declarations of Judith 15 Badgley, Pamela Yoder, Jeffrey Hipshman and Damon Mircheff; the Request for 16 Judicial Notice; the accompanying exhibits in support thereof, the [Proposed] Order, 17 and upon such other matters as may be presented to the Court on Plaintiff's behalf in 18 19 connection with this Motion. Dated: November 20, 2017 Respectfully submitted, 20 **RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP** 21 22 By: /s/ Damon Mircheff Damon D. Mircheff 23 Attorneys for Plaintiff 24 Judith Badgley, as Executor of the Estate of Patricia Yoder 25 26 27 28 Rutan & Tucker, LLP CASE NO. 4:17-cv-00877-HSG

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attorneys at law

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2 **I**.

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES INTRODUCTION AND ARGUMENT SUMMARY.

This is an action by plaintiff Judith Badgley, as a co-Executor of the Estate of
Patricia Yoder ("Plaintiff"), for the refund of the overpayment of \$3,810,004 in
estate tax paid in January 2014 for the Estate of Patricia Yoder, pursuant to the
Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

7 In 1998, Patricia Yoder ("Patricia") created a type of trust commonly known as a Grantor Retained Annuity Trust ("GRAT").³ She funded her GRAT with her 8 50% partnership interest in Y&Y Company, a partnership that owned commercial 9 properties. The GRAT was designed to pay Patricia a fixed annuity for 15 years 10 (paid quarterly) or until her earlier death and, at the expiration of the 15-year term or 11 on her earlier death to transfer the GRAT's corpus, less all remaining amounts due 12 under the obligation to pay the annuity, to Patricia's adult daughters Pamela Yoder 13 ("Pamela") and Judith Badgley ("Judith"). 14

The formation the and funding of the GRAT resulted in a taxable gift of the
discounted value of the GRAT's corpus to Pamela and Judith at the end of the 15year term, and Patricia filed a gift tax return reporting such gift. Patricia died in
November 2012, less than 90 days before the end of the GRAT's 15-year term, with
only \$101,992.89 remaining payable (\$75,564.75 on December 31, 2012, and
\$26,428.14 on February 1, 2013).

The issue in this case is how much of the date-of-death value of the GRAT's
corpus was includable in Patricia's gross estate for estate tax purposes, and turns on
the interpretation of Title 26 of the United States Code, section 2036(a)(1) and
validity of the Internal Revenue Service's regulation (26 C.F.R. § 20.2036-1) as
applied to Patricia's GRAT.⁴ Plaintiff maintains that only \$101,303.36 (the net

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³ This Motion refers to most individuals by first name because there are multiple members of the family with the last name of "Yoder." including decedent Patricia Yoder, her late husband Donald Yoder, her daughter Pamela Yoder, and her brother-

28 in-law H. Frank Yoder, III.

Unless otherwise noted, all section references are to the Internal Revenue Code

present value of the remaining unpaid annuity amounts valued using the section
 7520 interest rate for November 2012 of 1.07%) was includable under section 2033.
 Defendant, however, maintains that the entire date-of-death value of the corpus of
 the GRAT (\$10,987,029) was includable under section 2036(a)(1).

It is undisputed that had Patricia died even one day after January 31, 2013 5 (the expiration date of the GRAT's 15 year term) there would have been nothing 6 7 includable in her gross estate under section 2036(a)(1), and only \$26,428.14 (the pro-rated unpaid annuity amount for January 2013) includable in her gross estate 8 9 under section 2033. Defendant argues that because she died 89 days prior to the expiration of the 15 year term (and Defendant would make the same argument had 10 she died just one day prior thereto), the entire date-of-death value of the GRAT 11 12 corpus (\$10,987,029) was includable under section 2036(a)(1). For a statute to operate in such a draconian fashion, its applicability to the facts at hand should be 13 crystal clear. Because section 2036(a)(1) does not, on its plain language, apply to 14 Patricia's GRAT, the court should reject the Defendants' interpretation and 15 16 argument.

17 Plaintiff asserts that, based on the plain language of section 2036(a)(1), it does not apply to Patricia's GRAT. However in 2008, due to the increased use of 18 19 GRATs, the Internal Revenue Service promulgated the Regulation, which states that for *all GRATs*, the right to receive a fixed sum (i.e., an annuity) is a retention of a 20 "right to the income" from the transferred property within the meaning of section 21 2036(a)(1). Id. The tax consequence of the Regulation is that if the grantor of a 22 GRAT dies prior to the expiration of the term of a GRAT, an amount determined by 23 formula, up to the full date-of-death value of the GRAT corpus, is includable in the 24 25 grantor's gross estate for estate tax purposes.

- The validity of the Regulation as applied to Patricia's GRAT is thus central to
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²⁸ of 1986, as amended, Title 26 of the United States Code. All references the "Regulation" are to Treasury Reg., 26 C.F.R. § 20.2036-1.

this Motion. The Regulation treats all GRATs the same for purposes of section 1 2 2036(a)(1); but they are not all the same. The Regulation is invalid as to all GRATs. The Regulation correctly interprets section 2036(a)(1) for some kinds of GRATs, 3 namely: (i) GRATs with an "ordering rule" (i.e., a rule that income must first be 4 used to pay the annuity and principal used only to the extent there is insufficient 5 income); (ii) GRATs where, even absent an ordering rule, the annuity payments 6 7 cannot be satisfied without using income; and (iii) GRATs with payments of income 8 disguised to look like annuity payments. The Regulation, however, does not 9 properly interpret section 2036(a)(1) with respect to Patricia's GRAT, where none of those conditions exist. And here, the application of section 2036(a)(1), to 10 Patricia's GRAT resulted in the substantial overpayment of estate tax. 11

Because this dispute is centered upon the interpretation of section 2036(a)(1)
and the validity of the Regulation as applicable to Patricia's GRAT, the material
facts are limited and not reasonably disputed, and this Court can and should
summarily adjudicate the applicability of the Regulation to Patricia's GRAT, and
the estate tax properly due with respect to her GRAT.

17 Plaintiff will establish that: (i) Patricia did not retain the "right to income" from the interest in Y&Y Company which she transferred to her GRAT within the 18 meaning of section 2036(a)(1); (ii) Patricia did not retain the "possession or 19 enjoyment" of the transferred interest in Y&Y Company within the meaning of 20 21 section 2036(a)(1); (iii) even assuming (arguendo) that because of her status as the Trustee of the GRAT Patricia retained possession or enjoyment of the transferred 22 interest in Y&Y Company, she did not possess such possession or enjoyment at the 23 time of her death;⁵ and (iv) the IRS's interpretation of section 2036(a)(1), as applied 24 to Patricia's GRAT, is inconsistent with the statutory language and intent. 25

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Accordingly, under the correct interpretation and application of section

⁵ The point in time to test the applicability of section 2036(a)(1) is Patricia's date of death; of the requisite time periods specified in section 2036(a)(1), only a "period, which does not in fact end before [the decedent's] death" is relevant here. CASE NO. 4:17-cv-00877-HSG

2036(a)(1), Plaintiff is entitled to the requested refund of \$3,810,004, plus interest as
 provided by law from January 30, 2014.

3 II. <u>UNDISPUTED MATERIAL FACTS</u>.

4

A. <u>The Yoder Family real estate business.</u>

Patricia Yoder met her future husband Donald Yoder ("Donald") in the 1950s
while both were attending universities in Los Angeles, California. Shortly after they
graduated, they moved to Europe, where Donald performed his service with the
United States Army. After Donald completed his military service, he and Patricia
returned to the states, ultimately moving to California. Donald and Patricia had
three daughters: Pamela, Judith, and Deborah. Deborah died from cancer in her
early 20s.

Donald spent his professional life after the service developing, managing and
owning commercial real estate in California. He did so primarily through a general
partnership with his father H. Frank Yoder, Jr. (or H. Frank Yoder, II) called Yoder
and Yoder, and through a separate general partnership with his brother H. Frank
Yoder, III ("Frank Yoder") called Y&Y Company. Both partnerships purchased
undeveloped land, constructed commercial buildings, and, for most of those
projects, held and managed them as income-generating properties.

Donald and Frank Yoder were 50% partners in Y&Y Company. Badgley
decl., ¶¶ 3-4, Ex. A. In 1976, Donald and Frank Yoder executed a written
partnership agreement for Y&Y Company. *Id.*, Ex. A.⁶

22 23

B. <u>Patricia Yoder creates the GRAT in 1998, which gave her the right</u> to receive fixed annuity payments for 15 years.

Donald died in 1990. Under Y&Y Company's partnership agreement, Frank
Yoder had the right to buy out Donald's 50% interest in Y&Y Company on
Donald's death, but did not elect to do so. Badgley decl., ¶ 3, Ex. A; ¶ 4, Ex. B.

⁶ The facts in Section II.A. without evidentiary cites are not necessary to decide this Motion, but are provided for clarity and context.

Donald's 50% partnership interest in Y&Y Company thus passed to Patricia. *Id.* So
 too, did Donald's 50% partnership interest in Yoder and Yoder. Patricia and Frank
 Yoder executed an amendment to the Y&Y Company partnership agreement in
 1997. Badgley decl., ¶ 4, Ex. B.

From the mid-1980s through Patricia's death in late 2012, Yoder 5 Development, run by daughter Pamela (who lived in Orange County, and who 6 7 assumed responsibilities for Yoder Development and its property leasing and management functions from Donald), managed the properties owned by Y&Y 8 Company and Yoder & Yoder. Yoder decl., ¶¶ 3-4. After Donald's death, Patricia 9 gradually became involved with the partnerships, but for most the time from the 10 1990s through 2012, entrusted Pamela and Yoder Development with managing the 11 partnerships' properties. Id., ¶ 4; Mircheff decl., ¶ 2, Ex. U [Patricia Yoder depo., 12 21:1-26:1]. 13

In February 1998, Patricia created the GRAT. Badgley decl., ¶ 8, Ex. F. In
connection with doing so, Patricia transferred her 50% interest in Y&Y Company,
then valued at \$2,418,075, to the GRAT. Id., ¶ 8, Ex. F, ¶ 9, Ex. G [Patricia Yoder
1998 Gift (and Generation Skipping Transfer) Tax Return, with Limited Appraisal
Report concerning Patricia Yoder's one-half interest in Y&Y Company partnership,
dated December 29, 1997]. Patricia thus paid gift taxes of \$180,606 in connection
with creating the GRAT. Badgley decl., ¶ 9, Ex. G.

The reason for the GRAT was to enable Patricia to make a gift to her
daughters Pamela and Judith of the GRAT corpus remaining after paying Patricia a
fixed annuity for a term of 15 years. Badgley decl., Ex. F; Mircheff decl., ¶ 2, Ex. U
[Badgley depo., 59:3-12]. Patricia was the Trustor and Trustee under the GRAT,
but the GRAT provided that Pamela would become successor trustee if Patricia
became "unable or unwilling to act as Trustee" of the GRAT. Badgley decl., ¶ 8,
Ex. F.

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The GRAT provided for an annuity of \$302,259 per year to Patricia for a term

of 15 years or until her earlier death. Badgley decl., ¶ 8, Ex. F. At the expiration of
 the term of years (January 31, 2013) or upon Patricia's earlier death, the corpus of
 the GRAT, less all remaining amounts due under the annuity obligation, was to be
 (and was) distributed to Patricia's living descendants – Pamela and Judith.

From when Patricia created the GRAT in February 1998 until her death in 5 November 2012, Patricia's largest source of income was her interest in Yoder and 6 7 Yoder. Yoder decl., ¶ 6; Badgley decl., ¶ 14, Ex. H [2013 estate tax return]; see Hipshman decl., ¶¶ 6-10, Ex. M-Q [Patricia Yoder partnership tax returns]; ¶¶ 11-8 13, Exs. R-T [Patricia Yoder income tax returns]. The estate tax return for Patricia's 9 Estate reports that her 50% interest in Yoder and Yoder as of her death in 2012 was 10 worth \$10,410,000. Badgley decl., ¶ 14, Ex. H, ¶ 15, Ex. I. The 50% interest in 11 12 Y&Y Company in the GRAT, in contrast, was worth \$6,409,000 as of Patricia's death in 2012. Id. 13

Because of her income from Yoder and Yoder, Patricia did not require the
GRAT's annuity payments for her living expenses, and instead reinvested them.
Yoder decl., ¶ 6; see Badgley decl., ¶ 14, Ex. H; see Mircheff decl., ¶ 2, Ex. U
[Badgley depo., 119:25-121:9].

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C.

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Patricia Yoder becomes terminally ill in October 2012, and died less than three months before the expiration of GRAT's 15-year term.

Later in her life, Patricia had a chronic respiratory disease that made her
susceptible to respiratory infections. On or about October 22, 2012, Patricia was
hospitalized with acute symptoms, for what would be her final hospitalization before
her death on November 2, 2012. Yoder decl., ¶ 7.

25 On Tuesday, October 30, Patricia left the hospital and returned to her home in
26 Newport Beach to spend her remaining few days with her family and receive
27 hospice care. *Id.*, ¶ 8.

Pamela, who also lived in Orange County, California, was with Patricia daily

from when Patricia was hospitalized on October 22 through Patricia's death. Yoder
 decl., ¶¶ 7, 9. Judith, who lived in Sonoma County, traveled to Southern California
 to be with Patricia when she was hospitalized, and was also with Patricia daily from
 part of Patricia's hospitalization through Patricia's death on November 2. Badgley
 decl., ¶ 10.

In the last few days of her life, starting October 30 when she returned to her 6 7 home, Patricia suffered a rapid further deterioration in her physical health and mental acuity, and lost the ability to act on her own behalf, including with respect to 8 9 her financial affairs. Mircheff decl., \P 2, Ex. U [Badgley depo., 68:3 – 72:6]; \P 3, Ex. V [Pamela Yoder depo., 76:13 – 78"13, 82:3-11]; Yoder decl., ¶¶ 7, 9, Ex. K 10 [memo of Dr. John Storch]; Badgley decl., ¶ 11. Because Patricia ceased to have 11 12 capacity to act as Trustee under the GRAT, pursuant to Article Seven of the GRAT, Pamela automatically became the Successor Trustee. Badgley decl., ¶ 8, Ex. F. 13 Article Seven of the GRAT states in relevant part: 14 If at any time the Trustor becomes unable or unwilling to 15 act as Trustee, the persons listed below shall serve as successor Trustee in the order named. 16 First: Pamela A. Yoder 17 Second: Judith M. Badgley 18 19 Id. [GRAT, Article 7]. 20 When Patricia lost capacity to act as Trustee of the GRAT, Pamela Yoder understood that she was the successor Trustee, was willing and able to act as 21 successor Trustee, and accepted her appointment as successor Trustee of the GRAT. 22 Mircheff decl., ¶ 3, Ex. V [Pamela Yoder depo., 83:20 – 84:7, 86:17- 87:20]; Yoder 23 decl., ¶ 10. 24 25 Pamela, together with Judith, contacted Patricia's attorney to inquire if anything needed to be done with respect to the GRAT before Patricia's imminent 26 27 death. Mircheff decl., ¶ 2, Ex. U [Badgley depo., 73:13 – 74:16, 77:3-78:3]; Yoder decl., ¶ 10-11. Pamela and Judith also identified Patricia's banking records, 28

including the records for the GRAT. Yoder decl., ¶ 11; Mircheff decl., ¶ 3, Ex. V 1 2 [Pamela Yoder depo., 73:9-18].

On Wednesday, October 31, Pamela and Judith went to Wells Fargo Bank in 3 an effort to gain access to Patricia's account to pay Patricia's bills. Yoder decl., 4 ¶ 12; Mircheff decl., ¶ 3, Ec. V [Pamela Yoder depo., 79:12-80:13]. Wells Fargo 5 would not give them access to Patricia's account without substantiation that Patricia 6 7 lacked capacity. *Id.*

8 On Thursday, November 1, 2012, Pamela and Judith obtained a note from 9 Patricia's physician, Dr. John Storch, attesting to Patricia's lack of capacity, so Pamela could, among other things, gain access to the Wells Fargo account to pay 10 Patricia's bills. Yoder decl., ¶ 13, Ex. K. 11

12 On Friday, November 2, 2012, Patricia died in her home, only 89 days prior to the end of the GRAT's 15-year term. Dkt. 27 [Answer, ¶ 6]. Only the annuity 13 amount for the last quarter of 2012 and the prorated annuity amount for January, 14 2013 remained to be paid as of Patricia's death. 15

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D. Pamela and Judith file an estate tax return for Patricia's Estate in January 2014, with the Estate paying estate taxes of \$11,206,694.

Patricia's property was held in the Survivor's Trust, a trust created under the 18 19 D. and P. Yoder Revocable Trust dated June 15, 1982, as amended ("Survivor's 20 Trust"). Badgley decl., ¶ 5, Ex. C.

Pursuant to the July 1990 First Amendment to the D. and P. Yoder Revocable 21 Trust, Pamela and Judith became co-trustees of that trust when Donald and Patricia 22 became unwilling or unable to act as Trustee. Badgley decl., ¶ 6, Ex. D [1990 First 23 Amendment to D. and P. Yoder Revocable Trust]. Upon Patricia becoming 24 incapacitated shortly before her death, Pamela and Judith became co-trustees of the 25 Survivor's Trust, and, after Patricia's death, were co-executors of Patricia Yoder's 26 estate.⁷ Badgley decl., ¶ 6, Exs. D, ¶ 14, Ex. H [2013 estate tax return identifying] 27

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Pamela and Judith as co-executors of estate of Patricia Yoder]. 1

- 2 After Pamela and Judith discussed the estate tax return for Patricia's estate 3 with their tax advisors, they elected to pay the full amount of estate tax that they were told the IRS would assert was owed with respect to the GRAT under the 4 Regulation and, after paying those taxes, to seek a refund. Badgley decl., ¶ 13; 5 Yoder decl., ¶ 15. They thus included the entire date-of-death value of the corpus of 6 7 Patricia's GRAT in her gross estate for federal estate tax purposes. Badgley decl., 8 ¶ 14, Ex. H. Pamela and Judith took that approach (pay the taxes first, seek a refund later), rather than challenging the Regulation when filing the estate tax return, to 9 avoid the risk of being assessed an underpayment penalty should they not prevail on 10 their refund claim. Badgley decl., ¶ 13; Yoder decl., ¶ 15. 11
- On January 30, 2014, Pamela and Judith, as co-executors of Patricia's estate, 12 timely filed an estate tax return for Patricia's estate, and paid the estate tax reported 13 thereon in the amount, after an audit adjustment, of \$11,206,694. Dkt. No. 27 14 [Answer, ¶ 9]; Badgley decl., ¶¶ 14-15, Exs. H and I; Yoder decl., ¶ 16. 15
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E. The IRS did not act upon Plaintiff's Claim for Refund, and **Plaintiff filed this action.**

On June 1, 2016, Judith, in her capacity as a statutory executor of Patricia's 18 19 estate timely filed an IRS form 843 Claim For Refund (the "Claim for Refund") for 20 \$3,810,004 in estate tax, plus interest. Dkt. No. 27 [Answer, ¶ 10]; Badgley decl., ¶ 17, Ex. K. 21

Where the IRS does not advise of the allowance or disallowance of a claim 22 for refund within six months after filing, the taxpayer's representative (here, Judith, 23 as a statutory executor of Patricia's estate) may file a refund action in the United 24 25 States District Court. The IRS did not advise on the allowance or disallowance of the Claim for Refund within that time period. Dkt. No. 8 [FAC, ¶ 11]; Dkt. No. 27 26 27 [Answer, ¶ 11].

Judith, as a statutory executor of Patricia's estate, is the sole and absolute
 owner of this claim for refund, and has made no transfer or assignment of any part
 thereof. Badgley decl., ¶ 2. Judith filed this action in the Central District of
 California on January 23, 2017. Dkt. No. 1. Venue was subsequently transferred to
 the Northern District, where Judith resides. Dkt. Nos. 10 and 11 [stipulation to
 transfer venue, and order thereon]. The operative pleadings are the First Amended
 Complaint, and Defendant's Answer. Dkt. Nos. 8 and 27.

- 8 III. <u>LEGAL ARGUMENT</u>.
- 9

A. Legal standard for motion for summary judgment.

Summary judgment is appropriate when there is no genuine dispute as to any
material fact and the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. Fed.
R. Civ. P. 56(a). When the moving party has the burden of proof on a specific issue,
the moving party has the burden of establishing a prima facie case as to that issue on
its motion for summary judgment. *See UA Local 343 v. Nor–Cal Plumbing, Inc.,*48 F.3d 1465, 1471 (9th Cir. 1995).

"If the moving party meets its initial burden of showing the absence of a 16 17 material and triable issue of fact, the burden then moves to the opposing party, who must present significant probative evidence tending to support its claim or defense." 18 19 Intel Corp. v. Hartford Accident & Indem. Co., 952 F.2d 1551, 1558 (9th Cir. 1991). If the nonmoving party fails to make this showing, the moving party is entitled to a 20 judgment as a matter of law. Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317, 323 (1986). 21 "[S]ummary judgment should be granted where the nonmoving party fails to offer 22 evidence from which a reasonable jury could return a verdict in its favor." Arpin v. 23 Santa Clara Valley Transp. Agency, 261 F.3d 912, 919 (9th Cir. 2001); see UA 24 Local 343, 48 F.3d at 1471. Production of a "scintilla of evidence" in support of an 25 essential element will not forestall summary judgment. Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, 26 27 Inc., 477 U.S. 242, 252 (1986). Under this standard, "the mere existence of some alleged factual dispute between the parties will not defeat an otherwise properly 28

1 supported motion for summary judgment." *Id.* at 247-248.

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B. <u>Section 2036(a)(1) does not apply to Patricia's GRAT.</u>

Section 2036(a)(1) states in pertinent part;

The value of the gross estate shall include the value of all property to the extent of any interest therein of which the decedent has at any time made a transfer (except in case of a bona fide sale for an adequate and full consideration in money or money's worth), by trust or otherwise, under which he has retained for his life or for any period not ascertainable without reference to his death or *for any period which does not in fact end before his death* —

(1) the possession or enjoyment of, or the right to the income from, the property,

10 (Emphasis added.) Section 2036 is referred to as a "strings" section because the
11 underlying issue is whether the decedent has retained a "string" to pull the
12 transferred property back into his or her gross estate for estate tax purposes at full
13 date-of-death value.

14 To come within the scope of section 2036(a), the decedent must retain the

15 "string" until (i) the decedent's death, (ii) a period of time not ascertainable without

16 reference to the decedent's death or (iii) a period of time which does not in fact end

17 before the decedent's death. In this case the relevant "string" would be either "the

18 right to the income from, the [transferred] property," or "the possession or

19 enjoyment of . . . the [transferred] property." 26 U.S.C. § 2036(a)(1). Patricia

- 20 retained neither "string".
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1. Patricia Yoder did not retain a "right to the income" of the GRAT property within the meaning of section 2036.

23 Patricia did not either expressly or impliedly retain a right to the income from

24 the 50% interest in Y&Y Company which she transferred to the GRAT.⁸

25 Put simply, a fixed annuity payment payable out of transferred property is not

- 26 the same as the income from the property. The retention of the right to receive a
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 ⁸ A grantor can be considered to have impliedly retained a right to income where
 28 income must be used to satisfy the annuity payments or where the annuity payments are no more than disguised payments of income.

fixed sum over time should not be treated as the retention of a "right to the income" 1 2 from the transferred property within the meaning of section 2036(a)(1). While the income generated by the transferred property will necessarily fluctuate from year to 3 year, a fixed annual payment does not depend on the income generated or the 4 performance of the transferred asset, and does not fluctuate over time. See 5 Hipshman decl., ¶¶ 6-10, Exs. M-Q [rents generated by Y&Y Company, reported on 6 7 partnership tax returns, fluctuating by tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars 8 between 2008 and 2012]. The term "right" in section 2036(a)(1) (i.e., the "right to income") connotes 9 an ascertainable and legally enforceable power. See United States v. Byrum, 408 10 U.S. 125, 136-37 (1972). Here, Patricia had a right to receive annuity payments; she 11

did not have a right to receive income from the transferred property. An annuity
payment is a mixture of income and principal, or principal only, and does not vary
with the income of the GRAT.

Where a decedent . . . has transferred property to another in return for a promise to make periodic payments to the transferor for his lifetime, *it has been held that these payments are not income from the transferred property so as to include the property in the estate of the decedent.*

Fidelity-Philadelphia Trust Co. v. Smith, 356 U.S. 274, 280 n.8 (1958), emphasis 18 19 added; see also *Cain v. Comm'r*, 37 T.C. 185 (1961) (acq.) [the right to receive installment payments from the sale of property to continue for a period of years or 20 21 until the seller's death, whichever is shorter, does not constitute a right to income if the amounts do not vary with the income produced by the transferred property.] 22 23 Defendant argues that because income was at all times available to satisfy the 24 annuity payments, Patricia's right to the payments constituted a right to income even if income was not used to satisfy the annuity payments. This argument has no merit. 25

26 The possibility that the Trustee might use income to make the annuity payments was

- 27 no more than that: a possibility. Patricia, as beneficiary, could not legally compel
- 28 the Trustee to use income rather than principal to pay the annuity. She thus did not

have a "right to income" in any normal sense of that term. An indirect and remote
 right to income is not a right to income for purposes of section 2036 inclusion. See
 Wyly v. Commissioner, 610 F.2d 1282 (5th Cir. 1980).

In order for there to be a right, there must be a corresponding obligation.
Thus, a right over trust property requires a corresponding obligation on the part of
the trustee. In order for the beneficiary to have had a right to the GRAT's income,
the trustee must have had a corresponding obligation both to (1) generate income,
and (2) allocate income to the annuity payment.

9 The trustee of Patricia's GRAT had no obligation to generate income, and even though substantial income was generated, there was no obligation to pay 10 income rather than principal, as long as sufficient principal was available to satisfy 11 12 the annuity payments. Badgley decl., ¶ 8, Ex. F [GRAT]. Since the trustee was not 13 required to generate income, and since the trustee could satisfy the GRAT payments 14 out of principal alone, there was not even an implied right to the income. Badgley decl., ¶¶ 14-15, Exs. H and I [see Schedule G to estate tax return re appreciated 15 value of Y&Y Company and accumulated annuity payments]; Hipshman decl., 16 17 ¶¶ 11-13, Exs. R-T [showing accumulated value of GRAT annuity payments and GRAT principal]. 18

Defendant's position that Patricia's role as trustee distinguishes this case
because, as trustee, she had the discretion to use income rather than principal to
make the payments, also fails as a matter of law. In *United States v. Byrum*, the
Court explained,

At the outset, we observe that this Court has never held that trust property must be included in a settlor's gross estate solely because the settlor retained the power to manage trust assets. On the contrary, since our decision in *Reinecke v. Northern Trust Co.*, 278 U.S. 339 (1929), it has been recognized that a settlor's retention of broad powers of management does not necessarily subject an intervivos trust to the federal estate tax. Although there was no statutory analogue to section 2036(a)(2) when *Northern Trust* was decided, several lower court decisions decided after the enactment of the predecessor of section 2036(a)(2) have upheld the settlor's right to exercise

Rutan & Tucker, LLP attorneys at law

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managerial powers without incurring estate tax liability.408 U.S. at 132-133, footnotes omitted.

Defendant's argument that Patricia's role as trustee distinguishes this case 3 fails for an additional reason: The "right to the income" under section 2036(a)(1)4 must be held for the requisite time period, in this case until *the expiration of a* 5 period which does not in fact end before his/her death. So even if Defendant's 6 7 argument might otherwise have merit on different facts (which Plaintiff disputes), it has no merit in this case because the period during which Patricia was acting as the 8 9 trustee ended before her death. The undisputed facts show that Patricia became unable to continue to act as Trustee of her GRAT days before her death, and Pamela 10 11 became Successor Trustee pursuant to the GRAT's express terms.

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2. Patricia Yoder did not retain "the possession or enjoyment of . . . the [GRAT] property" within the meaning of section 2036.

15 The reference in section 2036(a)(1) to the "possession or enjoyment" of the transferred property ensures that the section reaches assets that do not generate 16 17 income in the conventional sense (e.g., vacation homes, works of art) if the decedent retained the right to occupy or otherwise use the property. See 5 Boris I. Bittker 18 19 & Lawrence Lokken, Federal Taxation of Income, Estates, and Gifts, par. 126.6.2 (2d Ed. 1993). Cases have equated the right to income with enjoyment of the 20 property. Cf. McNichols v. Commissioner, 265 F.2d 667 (3d Cir 1959); Estate of 21 Barlow v. Commissioner, 55 T.C. 666 (1971). Those cases dealt with fact situations 22 where there was no question that what the grantor retained or reserved was income; 23 in other words, "enjoyment" of the property existed where the decedent received the 24 25 income therefrom.

Section 2036(a)(1) thus uses the term "possession or enjoyment" to deal with
situations in which the property owner has divested himself of title, but has retained
the lifetime possession or use of the property. No case has held that a person has

retained "possession or enjoyment" of the property if he has transferred title
 irrevocably, made complete delivery of the property, and relinquished the right to
 income where the property is income producing. *See Byrum*, 408 U.S. 125. Here,
 Patricia transferred her title to the 50% interest in Y&Y Company irrevocably to the
 GRAT, and made complete delivery of that property to the GRAT. Thus, Patricia
 cannot be held to have retained the "enjoyment" of the property unless she retained
 the income generated by it. As established above, she did not.

B Defendant may argue that as Trustee, Patricia effectively held the right to
possess and enjoy the transferred property, regardless of the fact Patricia did not
retain any right to income. However, Patricia was not Trustee at her death. The
undisputed evidence shows that Pamela was the Successor Trustee of the GRAT at
Patricia's death, and hence, even under that argument by Defendant, Patricia was
not in possession of the GRAT property as of her death.

14 Moreover, Patricia's power as trustee of the GRAT to manage and control the property did not constitute "the . . . enjoyment of . . . the property" within the 15 meaning of section 2036(a)(1). See Byrum, 408 U.S. at 145-46; see also 16 Commissioner v. Holmes, 326 U.S. 480, 486 (1946) [stating that it is well settled 17 that the terms "enjoyment' and 'enjoy', as used in these and similar statutes, are not 18 19 terms of art, but connote substantial present economic benefit rather than technical vesting of title or estates."]; Old Colony Trust Co. v. U.S., 423 F.2d 601, 603-604 20 (1st Cir., 1970 ["We hold that no aggregation of purely administrative powers can 21 meet the government's amorphous test of 'sufficient dominion and control' so as to 22 be equated with ownership."]. 23

In sum, because Patricia did not retain "the right to the income from, the
[transferred] property," or "the possession or enjoyment of . . . the [transferred]
property" as of her death, no part of the GRAT was includable in her gross estate
under section 2036(a)(1).

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C. <u>The Regulation is overly broad, and to that extent is invalid as</u> <u>applied to Patricia's GRAT.</u>

1. The Court must disregard an IRS regulation that is inconsistent with the corresponding statute.

5 An interpretive regulation inconsistent with the statute will be ignored. *Prof'l Equities v. Commissioner*, 89 T.C. 165 (1987). Similarly, a regulation that departs 6 7 from the statute's express wording is invalid. Altera Corp. v. Commissioner, 145 8 T.C. No. 3 (July 27, 2015). Where the meaning and effect of a Code section is not 9 what the IRS thinks it should be, the IRS may not fix the perceived flaw by regulation. See Skidmore v. Swift & Co., 323 U.S. 134 (1944). Although the IRS 10 may believe that the use of GRATs must be curtailed because they are such a 11 powerful estate planning device with which to reduce the taxable estate, that does 12 not justify its interpretation of section 2036(a)(1) to require including the entire 13 date-of-death value of the trust corpus in the decedent's gross estate where the 14 statute does not clearly and expressly so provide. The "solution" is for Congress to 15 amend section 2036. 16

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2. The Regulation is an incorrect interpretation of Section 2036 as applied to Patricia's GRAT.

The intended scope of the Regulation is summed up in the following
statement in the Preamble to Treasury Decision 9414 (7/14/08): "The IRS and
Treasury Department believe . . . that under section 2036 every type of lifetime
interest in property (annuity, income, use or enjoyment of the transferred property,
etc.) retained for the requisite time period constitutes the retained possession and
enjoyment of the transferred property or the income therefrom, causing inclusion of
the transferred property in the transferor's gross estate."

The question presented in this case is whether a right to receive an annuity is a retained lifetime interest in the transferred property. Plaintiff maintains_that the retention of the right to receive a fixed sum over time should not be treated as the

retention of a right to the income of the transferred property or its possession or 1 2 enjoyment within the meaning of section 2036(a)(1). However, in the above-quoted statement the IRS and Treasury Department answer the question presented in the 3 affirmative by the simple assertion that an annuity is a retained lifetime interest in 4 5 property, without any supporting analysis or authority other than Ne. Pa. Nat'l Bank & Tr. Co. v. United States, 387 U.S. 213 (1967). Ne. Pa. Nat'l Bank & Tr. Co. is a 6 7 case where a court is stretching to rescue a marital deduction to save the taxpayer. 8 Such a decision, which goes out of its way to help the taxpayer by salvaging a 9 marital deduction out of a poorly drafted trust, should not dictate the rule for deciding how much, if any, of an annuity payment will be considered as income or 10 otherwise bind a court determining whether or to what extent the property of a 11 12 GRAT should be included in a decedent's estate. Defendant asks the Court to accept a strained reading of section 2036(a)(1) as applied to Patricia's GRAT to hurt – not 13 help – the taxpayer. 14

The conclusion that an annuity is a retained interest in the transferred 15 16 property, moreover, would cause all private annuities that do not qualify for the full 17 and adequate consideration exception under section 2036 to be included in the transferor-annuitant's gross estate under section 2036(a)(1). Such a conclusion is 18 contrary to the cases that have found no includable retained income interest in a 19 private annuity for life. See, e.g., Lafargue v. Commissioner, 689 F.2d 845 (9th Cir. 20 21 1982). The Preamble's self-serving and unpersuasive attempt to explain away the private annuity cases on the ground that they are negotiated with a third party falls 22 short because a private annuity entails little negotiation, as the tax law dictates what 23 must be paid to the annuitant in order to avoid adverse gift and estate tax 24 25 consequences.⁹

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⁹ By prescribing a formula for determining the amount of a GRAT corpus
 includable in a deceased grantor's gross estate, the Regulation tacitly concedes that a retained annuity does not constitute retained possession or enjoyment of property.
 No complicated formula is required where there is retained possession or enjoyment of property because the full date-of-death value of the property is includable. See CASE NO. 4:17-cy-00877-HSG

1 The IRS's rationale for applying section 2036(a)(1) to GRATs, as the Preamble to the Regulation reveals, is that section 2036(a)(1)'s application should 2 3 not be dependent on either the trustee's exercise of his or her discretion to invest in income or non-income producing assets, or the actual performance of the GRAT 4 assets. Whether section 2036(a)(1) should apply to a GRAT like Patricia's, 5 however, is not the issue – the issue is whether Section 2036(a)(1) does apply to 6 7 such a GRAT under its plain language. The Regulation is an improper interpretation 8 of section 2036 as applied to Patricia's GRAT.

9 The Regulation is a proper interpretation to some GRATs, where there is a
10 disguised or implied retention of income, and the outcome the IRS wants is not
11 draconian in those situations that can involve taxpayers trying to game the rules.
12 None of those situations applies to Patricia's GRAT.

For example, some GRATs have an ordering rule (a rule that income must
first be used to pay the annuity, and principal used only to the extent there is
insufficient income), and Plaintiff does not dispute that the Regulation is valid as
applied to such GRATs.

Some GRATs have annuity payments which are simply disguised payments
of income, so that the right to receive the fixed payments is, in substance, equivalent
to retaining the right to receive income. Plaintiff does not dispute that the
Regulation is valid as to these GRATs. See U.S. v. Ray, 762 F.2d 1361 (9th Cir.

21 1985) [annuity amount designed to approximate trust's expected income].

In some GRATs without an ordering rule or disguised payments of income,
the annuity payments nevertheless cannot be satisfied without using income. If this
condition exists *at the time of the grantor's death*, then section 2036(a)(1) applies.
Some GRATs, however, such as Patricia's GRAT, have no ordering rule, do

²⁷ paragraph (c)(2)(iv), Example 6 of the Regulation. As a further example, for a house where the grantor retains possession or enjoyment, the value of the corpus
28 (i.e., the house) on death is determined by a simple appraisal – no formula is required.

not provide for income payments disguised as annuity payments, and at the time of
 the grantor's death can satisfy the annuity payments entirely out of principal.
 Section 2036(a)(1) does not apply to these GRATs, and to the extent the Regulation

4 states otherwise it is contrary to the statute, and therefore invalid.

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D. <u>Including The Full Date-of-Death Value of the GRAT Corpus In</u> <u>Patricia's Taxable Estate Resulted In An Overpayment Of</u> \$3,810,004 In Estate Tax

8 As set forth in the Claim for Refund, including the full date-of-death value of
9 the GRAT corpus in Patricia's gross estate resulted in an overpayment of
10 \$3,810,004 in estate tax.

The only amount includable in Patricia's gross estate with respect to her
GRAT was the net present value as of Patricia's date of death of the remaining
unpaid annuity payments (\$101,303.36), includable under section 2033.

14 Except in a case where the annuity amount has been deliberately set to mirror the anticipated amount of annual income to be generated by the transferred property, 15 it is beyond dispute that the amount of a fixed annuity will not necessarily be the 16 17 same as the annual amount of income generated by the property. That is why the Regulation prescribes a formula for determining the amount of the GRAT corpus 18 19 which is includable in the deceased grantor's gross estate. If the annuity amount and the annual income were the same, there would be no need for the formula because 20 the entire date-of-death value of the property would be includable. This reveals a 21 flaw in the Regulation. In a case where the annuity amount is identical to the annual 22 amount of income generated by the property, the entire date of death value of the 23 24 property should be includable just as if there had been a straightforward retention of 25 the income. However, depending upon the section 7520 interest rate in effect at the grantor's date of death, the formula may result in less than the entire value being 26 27 includable. See paragraph (c)(2)(iv), Example 2 of the Regulation, where the date

1 of death value is \$300,000 and the amount includable is only \$205,440.¹⁰

Alternatively, even if section 2036(a)(1) were to require some portion of the corpus of Patricia's GRAT to be included in her gross estate, the includable amount should be determined under a formula that incorporates the amortization of principal as well as a portion of the income. This amount would be the net present value of the remaining unpaid annuity payments, which is \$101,303.36 – the same amount as already included under section 2033.

8 Consequently, the estate tax return (Form 706) for Patricia's estate overstated 9 the amount of the GRAT includable in her gross estate by \$10,885,735.60. See

10 Badgley decl., ¶ 14, Ex. H. For the GRAT, the estate tax return includes one half

11 interest in Y&Y Company of \$6,409,000, plus the two bank accounts with accrued

12 annuity payment monies with a total of \$4,578,029, for GRAT corpus of

13 \$10,987,029. *Id.* [estate tax return, Schedule G]; Badgley decl., ¶ 14; Hipshman

14 decl., ¶ 5. Because the correct amount includable in the estate was \$101,303.36, the

15 overstatement is \$10,885,735.60 (\$10,987,029 less \$101,303.36 equals

16 \$10,885,735.60). Badgley decl., ¶ 14, Ex. H.

As a consequence of this overstatement, the Estate overpaid the estate tax due by \$3,810,004.00 (\$10,885,725.60 x 35% tax rate = \$3,810,004.00).

19 IV. <u>CONCLUSION</u>.

Although the IRS would like section 2036 to apply to all GRATs, and
promulgated the Regulation staking out that wish, section 2036(a)(1) must be
limited to GRATs with an ordering rule, GRATs with disguised payments of
income, and GRATs where the annuity payments cannot be satisfied from principal
alone. Therefore, notwithstanding the Regulation, section 2036(a)(1) does not apply
to Patricia's GRAT. The only amount includable in Patricia's gross estate with
respect to her GRAT was the net present value, as of the date of Patricia's death, of

 ¹⁰ The Regulation protects itself against an error on the high side caused by the vagaries of the section 7520 interest rate by limiting the includable amount to the value of the trust's corpus at the decedent's date of death.

the remaining unpaid annuity payments (\$101,303.36), includable under section 1 2033. 2 3 Consequently, the estate tax return overstated the amount of the GRAT includable in her gross estate by \$10,885,725.64, and the Estate, accordingly 4 overpaid the estate tax due by \$3,810,004.00. Plaintiff is entitled to summary 5 judgment on her sole claim for relief for a refund of \$3,810,004, plus interest as 6 provided by law from January 30, 2014. 7 Dated: November 20, 2017 Respectfully submitted, 8 **RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP** 9 10 By: /s/ Damon Mircheff 11 Damon D. Mircheff Attorneys for Plaintiff Judith Badgley, as Executor of the Estate of Patricia Yoder 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 CASE NO. 4:17-cv-00877-HSG

1	INDEX	X OF EXHIBITS TO MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT
2		Declaration of Judith Badgley
3	А.	Partnership Agreement of Y&Y Company dated May 1, 1976 (Badgley
4		Depo., Ex. 1);
5	B.	First Amendment to Partnership Agreement of Y&Y Company dated
6		September 25, 1997 (Badgley Depo, Ex. 2);
7	C.	Agreement Establishing the D. and P. Yoder Revocable Trust dated
8		June 15, 1982 (Badgley Depo., Ex. 3);
9	D.	First Amendment to D. and P. Yoder Revocable Trust dated July 26,
10		1990 (Badgley Depo., Ex. 8);
11	E.	Second Amendment to D. and P. Yoder Revocable Trust dated July 29,
12		1998 (Badgley Depo., Ex. 5);
13	F.	Grantor Retained Annuity Trust dated February 1, 1998 (Badgley
14		Depo., Ex. 8);
15	G.	Form 709 United States Gift Tax Return of Patricia Yoder for tax year
16		1998 (with appraisal for one-half interest in Y&Y Company, control-
17		numbered PY000160-PY000233);
18	H.	Form 706 United States Estate Tax Return for Estate of Patricia Yoder
19		dated January 29, 2014 (Badgley Depo., Ex. 12);
20	I.	July 29, 2013 Discount Study for 50% general partnership interest in
21		Y&Y Company that was exhibit to Estate Tax Return for Estate of
22		Patricia Yoder (PY000114-PY000159);
23	J.	Form 890 Waiver of Restrictions on Assessment and Collection of
24		Deficiency and Acceptance of Overassessment – Estate, Gift, and
25		Generation – Skipping Transfer Tax dated November 9, 2015 for Estate
26		of Yoder (Badgley Depo., Ex. 18);
27	К.	Form 843 Claim for Refund and Request for Abatement dated May 16,
28		2016 for Estate of Patricia Yoder (Badgley Depo. Ex., 17);
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1		Declaration of Pamela Yoder
2	L.	Memo from John C. Storch M.D. of November 1, 2012 (Badgley
3		Depo., Ex. 9);
4		
5		Declaration of Jeffrey Hipshman
6	М.	2008 Partnership Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder (PY001714-
7		1752);
8	N.	2009 Partnership Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder (PY001753-
9		1792);
10	О.	2010 Partnership Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder (PY001793-
11		1834);
12	Р.	2011 Partnership Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder (PY001835-
13		1876);
14	Q.	2012 Partnership Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder (PY001877-
15		1926);
16	R.	2010 Federal and State Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder
17		(PY001193-1264)
18	S.	2011 Federal and State Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder
19		(PY001265-1356)
20	Т.	2012 Federal and State Income Tax Return for Patricia Yoder
21		(PY001357-1464)
22		
23		Declaration of Damon Mircheff
24	U.	Excerpts from August 28, 2017 Deposition of Plaintiff Judith Badgley;
25		and
26	V.	Excerpts from October 17, 2017 Deposition of Pamela Yoder.
27		
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