

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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<b>TONY AND JENNIE PUNCH, as Parents</b>	:	<b>ERIE DIVISION</b>
<b>and Natural Guardians of LINCOLN</b>	:	
<b>PUNCH, a minor, and In Their Own Right,</b>	:	
	:	<b>CIVIL ACTION NO. 1:12-cv-154-SPB</b>
<b>Plaintiffs,</b>	:	
<b>v.</b>	:	
	:	
<b>DOLLAR TREE STORES, INC.,</b>	:	<b><u>JURY TRIAL DEMANDED</u></b>
	:	
<b>Defendant/Third Party Plaintiff,</b>	:	
<b>v.</b>	:	
	:	
<b>DOLLAR CONNECTION, LTD.</b>	:	
	:	
<b>Third Party Defendant.</b>	:	

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**THIRD-PARTY COMPLAINT IN CIVIL ACTION**

Plaintiffs, Tony and Jennie Punch, as Parents and Natural Guardians of Lincoln Punch, a Minor, and in their own right, by and through their undersigned counsel, Kline & Specter, P.C., herein file this Third-Party Complaint, and bring this civil action against third-party defendant Dollar Connection, Ltd., pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 14(a)(3), and in support thereof aver as follows:

1. Plaintiffs, Tony Punch and Jennie Punch, are the Parents and Natural Guardians of Lincoln Punch, a minor.
2. Tony Punch, Jennie Punch and Lincoln Punch are all citizens and residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, residing therein at 375 Valley Park Drive, Sugar Grove, PA 16350.
3. Defendant, Dollar Tree Stores, Inc., is a corporation or other jural entity incorporated in the State of Virginia, with a principal place of business of 500 Volvo Parkway, Chesapeake, VA 23320.
4. Third-Party Defendant, Dollar Connection, Ltd., is a foreign corporation with a

principal place of business located at 511-4 Hunghom Commercial Centre, 39MA TAU WAI Road, Tower A, Hunghom, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China. 4.

5. Plaintiffs initiated this civil action by way of Complaint filed July 6, 2012 against Dollar Tree Stores, Inc. *See* Plaintiffs' Complaint, attached hereto as Exhibit "A." Plaintiffs filed an Amended Complaint against Dollar Tree Stores, Inc. on October 1, 2012. *See* Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint, attached hereto as Exhibit "B."

6. Dollar Tree Stores, Inc. filed a Third Party Complaint against Dollar Connection, Ltd. on January 14, 2014. *See* Dollar Tree's Third Party Complaint, attached hereto as Exhibit "C."

7. Plaintiffs file the instant Complaint against Dollar Connection, Ltd., pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 14(a)(3).

8. On or about April 12, 2011, Lincoln Punch was caused to ingest multiple button batteries that had come out of a pair of lighted tweezers.

9. On or about April 12, 2011, Lincoln Punch's older sibling was using and/or handling a pair of lighted tweezers that were powered by button batteries.

10. On or about April 12, 2011, the button batteries came out while the older sibling was using the tweezers.

11. On or about April 12, 2011, Lincoln Punch was caused to ingest multiple button batteries that had come out of a pair of lighted tweezers, after being given these by his older sibling.

12. The subject tweezers had been purchased by Lincoln's mother, Jennie Punch, from a Dollar Tree retail store.

13. The subject tweezers are cylindrical with a hard plastic base and a plastic cap that covers the tweezing end.

14. The subject tweezers are toy-like in that they are a small object that can be easily gripped by a child and have an attractive, battery-powered light that can be turned on and off.



15. The subject tweezers were sold loose, in a bin, at the Dollar Tree store, and did not include any packaging, warnings or instructions. Specifically, the subject tweezers did not contain any warnings that there were button batteries inside that could be easily accessed and/or removed by children. There were no warnings that the tweezers should be kept out of the reach of children and not used or handled by children.

16. Because the subject tweezers were sold without any packaging, warnings, or instructions, Tony and Jennie Punch were unaware that the subject tweezers were unsafe to be used by children, that the batteries were easily accessible to children, and that the tweezers should be kept out of reach of children.

17. The fact that the tweezers had a light and magnifying glass indicated to Jennie Punch that the subject tweezers were specifically designed to be used on children to remove splinters and small objects from their skin.

18. Given the toy-like appearance of the tweezers and the lack of warnings specifically instructing parents to keep the tweezers out of reach, it was entirely foreseeable that a child would handle or use the tweezers.

19. Given the attractive design of the tweezers and the lack of warnings, it was not

apparent that a young child was not an intended user of the tweezers.

20. The subject tweezers were manufactured and/or distributed and/or supplied by Dollar Connection, Ltd. Dollar Connection, Ltd. sold the subject tweezers to Greenbrier International, Inc., Dollar Tree Stores, Inc.'s importing affiliate, to be offered for sale to customers at Dollar Tree retail stores. *See* Exhibit "C" at p. 3, ¶11.

21. The subject tweezers were improperly designed, constructed and manufactured, such that the button batteries could be easily accessed and removed by anyone, including young children.

22. Multiple alternative designs existed that would have restricted and prevented a child from accessing the battery compartment.

23. Such alternative designs were feasible, available, and would have required no extra cost in manufacturing the tweezers.

24. Such alternative designs were necessary given the obvious dangers of battery ingestion by children and the statistics indicating that the number of battery-related emergency department visits for children increased from 2,591 in 1990 to 5,525 in 2009, with the majority of cases involving batteries from household products.

25. The button batteries that Lincoln Punch ingested became lodged in his trachea and stomach, causing substantial damage to his body before being surgically removed.

26. As a result of ingesting the button batteries, Lincoln lost all of the toes on his right foot, all of the toes on his left foot, his left forefoot, portions of all fingers on his right hand, and portions of four fingers on his left hand.

27. As a result of the ingestion, Lincoln suffered kidney damage, cardiac damage, gastrointestinal damage, and other injuries identified in his medical records.

28. As a result of the button battery ingestion, Lincoln Punch has experienced physical and emotional pain and suffering, loss of life's pleasures, humiliation, embarrassment and disfigurement, medical expenses, and lost earning capacity.

29. The subject tweezers, manufactured and/or distributed and/or supplied and/or sold by Dollar Connection, Ltd., were dangerous and defective in that they contained button batteries, they failed to restrict access to the button batteries, failed to display or contain or include appropriate warnings or instructions, and failed to adequately protect and hold the button batteries.

30. Dollar Connection, Ltd. was also negligent and careless in manufacturing and/or distributing and/or supplying and/or selling this product for retail sale without any warnings or instructions and without alerting customers to the potential dangers of button batteries.

**WHEREFORE**, Jennie Punch and Tony Punch, as Parents and Natural Guardians of Lincoln Punch, a minor, and in their own right, demand judgment against defendant, Dollar Connection, Ltd., for damages, along with interest and costs of suit.

**KLINE & SPECTER**  
*A Professional Corporation*

By: s/Dominic C. Guerrini, Esquire  
SHANIN SPECTER, ESQUIRE  
DOMINIC C. GUERRINI, ESQUIRE  
TRACIE L. PALMER, ESQUIRE  
1525 Locust Street  
Nineteenth Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
(215) 772-1000  
*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

Dated: February 3, 2015

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Dominic C. Guerrini, Esquire, hereby certify that a true and correct copy of Plaintiffs' Third-Party Complaint was hereby submitted for electronic service this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of February, 2015, via the Court's electronic filing system, upon the following:

Kristy E. McCabe, Esquire  
Mintzer, Sarowitz, Zeris, Ledva & Meyers  
Centre Square, West Tower  
1500 Market Street  
Suite 4100  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
*Attorney for Defendant, Dollar Tree Stores, Inc.*

Evan S. Eisner, Esquire  
Rawle & Henderson, LLP  
The Widener Building  
One South Penn Square  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
*Attorney for Defendant, Dollar Connection, Ltd.*

**KLINE & SPECTER,  
*A Professional Corporation***

BY: *s/Dominic C. Guerrini, Esquire*  
DOMINIC C. GUERRINI, ESQUIRE  
*Attorney for Plaintiffs*