



Paraiba.com to Sue AGTA, GIA: Authentic Paraiba Tourmaline Mined Only in Brazilian Province

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According to David Sherman, a long-time champion of the hard to find Paraiba gemstone, the good name of Paraiba has been hijacked. He is taking legal action against the American Gem Trade Association (AGTA, a corporation whose purpose includes the protection of the members of the trade association and promotion of such members' business and the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), which certifies the pedigree of precious and semi-precious gemstones.

PR9.NET April 10, 2008 - San Jose, CA - In approximately 2005, it became known in the jewelry industry that inferior African stones were being passed off by the defendants and others as Paraiba stones. To cover up their actions, Sherman alleges, the AGTA and the other defendants entered into a conspiracy: they agreed to redefine as a Paraiba stone any cuprous elbaite that contained copper and manganese. "They stood to gain a lot from what they decided to do," says Sherman. "They had a vested economic interest in preventing lawsuits for fraud, maintaining the value of the African stones, or in protecting the members of the gem association. AGTA had a clear economic interest in passing off of the African stones Paraiba stones."

The AGTA controls certifications and collects fees for providing them. In 2005, the AGTA and other defendants collectively decided to redefine term of Paraiba stones to include all cuprous elbaite regardless of place of origin. The AGTA used its power in the jewelry business as the final arbiter regarding the qualifications and certification of gemstones to widely disseminate the false information regarding the redefinition of Paraiba stones.

"What the AGTA did was wrong," says Sherman. "We intend to go all the way," says Sherman. "Ultimately, it's the public that has been injured here. It's in the interest of the gem industry in the long run to prevent this destructive sort of fraud."

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About The Grossman Group

The Grossman Group is a marketing and public relations consultancy serving clients nationwide from Portland, Oregon.

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