

BRENNA BIRD
ATTORNEY GENERAL

STEVEN BLANKINSHIP
CHIEF DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL



1305 E. WALNUT ST.
DES MOINES, IA 50319
Main: 515-281-5164 O Direct: 515-954-9564
Email: steven.blankinship@ag.iowa.gov
www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

March 31, 2026

Kristi Onstot
Executive Secretary
Executive Council
State Capitol
LOCAL

Re: Retention of Special Counsel

Dear Ms. Onstot:

Our office requests authorization under Iowa Code section 13.7 to retain the law firm of Nachawati Law Group (Nachawati), as special counsel. Special counsel will provide legal services and representation to Iowa with respect to an investigation into and possible litigation of certain business practices of PDD Holdings, Inc. and Whaleco, Inc. d/b/a Temu (the Temu Group). The investigation and possible litigation will involve the companies' potential negligent, unfair, deceptive, or otherwise unlawful provision of products and services, including potential unlawful data privacy and security practices. We also recommend under Iowa Code section 23B that the firm be retained on a contingent-fee basis.

The Attorney General has determined that it is necessary and appropriate to retain private special counsel to assist her office in the investigation of and potential litigation against the Temu Group for these reasons:

- The investigation and potential litigation will involve novel and complex claims that have not been litigated to judgment in any court.
- Extensive resources will be required, as any potential litigation will be time- and labor-intensive.
- Potential litigation may include, but is not limited to extensive motion practice, including on complex antitrust questions and other issues of first impression; extensive, time-consuming

discovery of multiple corporate entities, including numerous depositions, and potentially extensive motion practice to ensure compliance with the state's discovery requests; identifying experts and then potential expert reports, responses, and discovery.

- The anticipated complexity of any cases arising from these investigations requires counsel with a full range of trial- and appellate-level experience litigating complex matters involving both state and federal law.

We recommend Nachawati because of its experience litigating complex cases across a range of subject areas in both state and federal courts. Additionally, Nachawati has experience in investigating and litigating against the Temu Group on behalf of other attorney generals' offices. Nachawati has a deep bench of advocates with experience in high-stakes and consumer-protection litigation, which the State needs in this investigation of the Temu Group and any resulting litigation.

Our office has determined that this proposed contingent representation is both cost effective and in the public interest. And we have determined that a procurement process is not feasible under these unique circumstances. We therefore recommend approval of Nachawati as special counsel. The engagement will be governed by a separate contingent fee agreement under Iowa Code section 23B.3.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Blankinship", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steven Blankinship
Chief Deputy Attorney General