

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA

KELLY MASON,
Plaintiff,

v.

CASE NO.:

BYRON DONALDS,
Defendant.

_____ /

COMPLAINT FOR ASSAULT

Plaintiff, KELLY MASON ("Plaintiff"), sues Defendant, BYRON DONALDS ("Donalds"), and states:

INTRODUCTION

This action arises from Defendant Byron Donalds' intentional and unlawful assault against Plaintiff Kelly Mason inside a public grocery store in Collier County, Florida. Rather than engaging in lawful discourse, Defendant deliberately confronted Plaintiff regarding litigation involving his wife, aggressively cornered her while she was accompanied by her husband and two young children, berated and insulted her, and threatened that he could "crush" or "finish" her. Defendant's threatening conduct was further amplified by his senior advisor, who pursued Plaintiff through the store while yelling and creating a public disturbance. Defendant's words, demeanor, physical positioning, and coordinated actions were calculated to place Plaintiff in immediate fear of bodily harm and succeeded in doing exactly that. Florida law does not permit any individual—regardless of political office, prominence, or influence—to use threats and intimidation to instill a well-founded fear of imminent violence. This action seeks to hold

Defendant accountable for his intentional tortious conduct and to recover the damages Plaintiff suffered as a direct result of that unlawful assault

PARTIES

1. Plaintiff is a resident of Collier County, Florida.
2. Defendant Byron Donalds is a resident of Florida and, at all material times, was present in Collier County.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to Article V of the Florida Constitution.
4. Venue is proper in Collier County because the acts giving rise to this action occurred there.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

5. On August 23, 2022, Plaintiff was shopping at the Seed to Table grocery store in Naples, Florida with her husband and two young children.
6. Defendant rushed toward Plaintiff after learning that Plaintiff was involved in litigation concerning Defendant's wife.
7. Defendant initiated an aggressive confrontation concerning that litigation.
8. Defendant intentionally positioned himself so as to confront Plaintiff while she was accompanied by her family.
9. During the confrontation, Defendant demanded that Plaintiff abandon or dismiss the litigation involving Defendant's wife.
10. Defendant angrily berated Plaintiff.
11. Defendant repeatedly insulted Plaintiff.

12. Defendant threatened Plaintiff by stating, in substance, that if he would "finish" or "crush" Plaintiff.
13. Defendant's demeanor was hostile, angry, intimidating, and confrontational.
14. Defendant's senior advisor and companion, Larry Wilcoxson, simultaneously inserted himself into the encounter.
15. Wilcoxson aggressively followed Plaintiff through the store while yelling loudly and creating a public disturbance.
16. Plaintiff attempted to disengage from Defendant and proceed toward the front of the store with her children.
17. Defendant and Wilcoxson continued the confrontation as Plaintiff attempted to leave.
18. Plaintiff became trapped and cornered during portions of the encounter.
19. Because of Defendant's threatening words, aggressive conduct, close physical proximity, and coordinated actions with Wilcoxson, Plaintiff reasonably believed Defendant was about to inflict immediate harmful or offensive physical contact upon her.
20. Plaintiff feared imminent violence.
21. Plaintiff experienced severe emotional distress, humiliation, fear, anxiety, embarrassment, and mental anguish.
22. The incident occurred in front of Plaintiff's young children and numerous patrons of the store.
23. The encounter was sufficiently alarming that Plaintiff contacted the owner of Seed to Table during the incident seeking assistance.

COUNT I:
ASSAULT

24. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 23.

25. Under Florida law, an assault occurs where a defendant intentionally commits an unlawful act that creates a well-founded fear in another that imminent violence is about to occur.

26. Defendant intentionally engaged in threatening conduct directed toward Plaintiff.

27. Defendant intentionally used threatening language while aggressively confronting Plaintiff.

28. Defendant intentionally advanced upon Plaintiff while she was effectively cornered within the store.

29. Defendant acted in concert with Wilcoxson, who continued to pursue Plaintiff while yelling and creating an escalating confrontation.

30. Defendant's conduct went far beyond mere insults or political disagreement.

31. A reasonable person under the same circumstances would have believed that immediate physical violence was about to occur.

32. Plaintiff actually experienced a well-founded fear of imminent harmful or offensive contact.

33. Defendant intended to intimidate, threaten, and place Plaintiff in fear.

34. As a direct and proximate result, Plaintiff suffered:

- a. emotional distress;
- b. mental anguish;
- c. humiliation;
- d. anxiety;

e. fear for her own safety and the safety of her children;

f. other damages to be proven at trial.

35. Defendant's conduct was intentional, malicious, and in reckless disregard of Plaintiff's rights, thereby entitling Plaintiff to punitive damages pursuant to section 768.72, Florida Statutes, upon the requisite evidentiary showing.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendant for:

A. Compensatory damages;

B. Punitive damages;

C. Costs;

D. Prejudgment and post-judgment interest;

E. Trial by jury; and

F. Such other relief as this Court deems just and proper.

Dated: July 7, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Anthony F. Sabatini
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