

Firm: Woman behind Silicon Valley gender suit demanded \$2.7M

June 5 2015

The woman behind a high-profile gender discrimination lawsuit against a Silicon Valley venture capital firm demanded \$2.7 million not to appeal the jury verdict against her, the firm said Friday.

Attorneys for Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers included the figure in court documents filed in San Francisco Superior Court against Ellen Pao, and a spokeswoman for the company said Pao sought the money in exchange for not appealing.

"We have no intention of accepting this unreasonable demand," the spokeswoman, Christina Lee, said.

Heather Wilson, a spokeswoman for Pao, declined comment on Friday's court filing or statement by Kleiner Perkins.

Pao filed a notice this week that she was appealing the March verdict, in which a jury found Kleiner Perkins did not discriminate or retaliate against Pao.

The case became a flashpoint in an ongoing discussion about gender inequity at elite technology and venture capital firms, where women are grossly underrepresented.

During the trial, Kleiner Perkins attorney Lynne Hermle tried to portray Pao as someone just interested in money. She said Pao failed as an investor at the company and sued to get a big payout as she was being

shown the door. Pao is now interim CEO of the Internet discussion forum Reddit.

Pao's attorneys said she was an accomplished junior partner who was passed over for a promotion because the firm used different standards to judge men and women, and that she was fired when she complained about discrimination.

Pao told jurors that her [lawsuit](#) was intended in part to create equal opportunities for women in the [venture capital](#) sector.

Kleiner Perkins is seeking more than \$970,000 in legal costs from Pao. It had said it would waive all costs if Pao did not pursue an appeal.

Kleiner Perkins defended the costs in Friday's filing against Pao's claims that they were improper and excessive.

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