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Los Angeles Superior Court

JAN 152019

John A. Glarky Breunive Officer/Clerk

BY MARY GARGIA, DEPHY

Colbern C. Stuart, III (SBN 177897) LEXEVIA, PC 4139 Via Marina PH 3 Marina Del Rey, CA 90292 Telephone: (310) 746-6112 Facsimile: (424) 228-5272

Attorney for Plaintiff COLBERN C. STUART, III

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CENTRAL DIVISION

BC429951

COLBERN C. STUART, III,

an Individual,

PLAINTIFF

V.

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ASHWORTH, BLANCHET, CHRISTENSON & KALEMKIARIAN

a Professional Corporation.

SHARON BLANCHET,

an Individual,

and does 1 - 100, inclusive

DEFENDANTS

VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES
FOR LEGAL MALPRACTICE,
INTENTIONAL AND NEGLIGENT
MISREPRESENTATION, FRAUD, BREACH
OF CONTRACT, INTENTIONAL AND
NEGLIGENT INFLICTION OF
EMOTIONAL DISTRESS, BREACH OF
FIDUCIARY DUTIES, AND UNFAIR
BUSINESS PRACTICES PURSUANT TO
CALIFORNIA BUSINESS AND
PROFESSIONS CODE SECTION 17200 ET
SEO.; DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

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1. This is a Complaint for Legal Malpractice, Intentional and Negligent Misrepresentation, Fraud, Breach of Contract, Intentional and Negligent Infliction of Emotional Distress, Breach of Fiduciary Duties, and Unfair Business Practices pursuant to California Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.

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2. Plaintiff Colbern C. Stuart, III, Esq. ("Stuart") is a citizen of the state of California, doing business as managing partner of a law firm operating in Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Jose, and residing in Marina Del Rey, Los Angeles County, California.

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3. Defendant Ashworth, Blanchet, Christenson & Kalemkiarian ("ABC&K") is a California Professional Corporation with a principal place of business located at 2250 Third Avenue, San

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VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES FOR LEGAL MALPRACTICE

Diego, California, 92101 and doing business in Los Angeles County, CA.

- 4. Defendant Sharon Blanchet ("Blanchet") at all times relevant hereto was an attorney doing business at ABC&K with a principal place of business located at 2250 Third Avenue, San Diego, California, 92101 and doing business in Los Angeles County, CA.
- 5. Venue within this County and division is appropriate as all times relevant hereto,
 Defendants were conducting business as a law firm specializing in the area of family law in Los
 Angeles and San Diego counties by representing, advising, communicating, collecting revenue
 from, making representations to, and causing harm to Plaintiff within Los Angeles County.
- 6. Defendants and ABC&K, Blanchet, and Does 1-100 and each of them at all times relevant hereto were the agents of every other Defendant, acting within the scope of said agency, such that each and every Defendant herein is liable and accountable for the acts of each other Defendant.
- 7. Plaintiff is unaware of the true names and capacities of Does 1-100 and will amend this Verified Complaint for Damages upon learning the true names and capacities of said parties.

First Cause of Action: Legal Malpractice (Against Defendants and Does 1-10)

- 8. Plaintiff incorporates herein paragraphs 1-7 above as if set forth fully herein.
- 9. At all times relevant hereto, Defendants owed a duty of care to Plaintiff to represent him in legal advice, communications, billing, and guidance in accordance with relevant legal standards of care within the practice of law.
- 10. Defendants breached the relevant duty care by failing to adequately represent Plaintiff in providing competent legal advice, full and accurate communications, accurate billing, and legal advice in accordance with relevant legal standards within the practice of law, as detailed more fully below.
- 11. Specifically, Defendants, inter alia, recommended that Plaintiff stipulate to retaining Stephen Doyne ("Doyne") as a mediator in the family law matter in which Plaintiff was involved.
- 12. Defendants represented to Plaintiff that Doyne was one of the most qualified professionals in San Diego County.
- 13. Defendants represented to Plaintiff in an email from Blanchet to Stuart that "You'll love Dr. Doyne!"
- 14. Defendants represented to Plaintiff that Doyne, as a mediator, preferred to work toward a

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shared custody plan between parents.

- 15. Defendants represented to Plaintiff that Doyne charged reasonable fees and was less expensive than other methods, and less expensive than litigating such matters in Court.
- 16. Defendants represented to Plaintiff that Doyne "always" recommends 50/50 custody sharing between parents.
- 17. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne had a close personal and professional relationship with opposing counsel Jeffrey Fritz and Marilyn Bierer (collectively "Opposing Counsel").
- 18. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that on information and belief that Doyne had received numerous referrals of clients/patients and generated millions of dollars in revenue from referrals by Opposing Counsel.
- 19. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne was not authorized to conduct mediations because he regularly failed to file papers required by California Rules of Court to qualify him as a mediator, C.R.C. 5.010, including, inter alia, the following forms: FL 325, FL 326, and FL 327 (attached hereto at exhibits "A", "B", and "C" respectively).
- 20. Defendants failed to research Doyne's qualifications and eligibility, and failed to advise Plaintiff that these forms were forms required by law before Doyne could act as mediator in the Stuart matter or any other matter which Doyne had worked.
- 21. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne's failure to file forms FL 325, FL 326, and FL 327 made him legally incompetent to perform the services for which Defendant recommended him.
- 22. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne had previously failed to file the required forms in approximately hundreds of similar matters, including numerous other matters for which Defendants had recommended Doyne.
- 23. Defendants failed to properly investigate Doyne's background, qualifications, credentials, relationships with opposing counsel, and history of filing forms FL 325, FL 326, and FL 327.
- 24. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne's failure to file these required forms enabled Doyne to overcharge for his services, to commit tax evasion in Plaintiff's matter and dozens of similar matters for which Defendants recommended Doyne.
- 25. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne was in fact not authorized to conduct the hundreds of mediations and evaluations he had performed for years prior, including Plaintiff's,

and was not authorized to perform the services Defendants recommended Doyne for Plaintiff.

- 26. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne's C.V. contains numerous misrepresentations, misleading statements, falsified credentials and false claims relating to his experience.
- 27. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that dozens of Doyne's present and former clients had complained about Doyne's services, accusing him of extortion, fraud, dishonesty, bias, overbilling, falsified credentials, tax evasion and/or numerous additional misrepresentations. Defendants knew or had reason to know of many such complaints. See Exhibits D-Q attached hereto.
- 28. Defendants advised Plaintiff that Doyne would perform collateral investigation with third parties to verify claims made by litigants, yet Doyne failed to perform said collateral investigations with any third parties as Defendants represented.
- 29. Defendants represented to Plaintiff that Doyne was honest and reliable. Doyne was not honest and reliable.
- 30. Defendants advised Plaintiff that Doyne would not permit ex-parte contact between himself and other parties without Plaintiff's presence or consent. Doyne in fact initiated or acquiesced to extensive ex-parte contact between himself and other parties without Plaintiff's presence or consent.
- 31. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that despite Doyne's track record of misrepresentations and abuse, Doyne had claimed that no one could sue him for extortion, fraud, misrepresentation, dishonesty, overbilling and incompetence because he claimed to be "immune" or "privileged" from all such lawsuits.
- 32. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne would not conduct a "mediation", but would instead attempt to act beyond his authority as a "judge" in the case.
- 33. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne regularly overbilled for services he did perform.
- 34. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne regularly billed for services that he did not, in fact, perform.
- 35. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne would use his position as "mediator" to refer Plaintiff to Doyne's many colleagues—many of whom also charge exorbitant fees—and

require that Plaintiff utilize those professionals' unnecessary services or risk losing custody of his child.

- 36. Defendants knew or had reason to know, yet failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne did not possess the qualifications, licenses, and degrees he claims to possess.
- 37. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne would use Plaintiff's son as a "pawn" to attempt to extract tens of thousands of dollars from Plaintiff, depriving Plaintiff of thousands of dollars.
- 38. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne regularly told parties he produced a report to both counsel for "review and approval" prior to delivering it to the Court, but regularly failed to abide by that promise.
- 39. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne falsely claimed that he preferred "equal and shared custody" between parents and that he would work toward such an "equal and shared" custody situation.
- 40. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne would use divisive instruments such as unnecessary supervised visitation, separation instructions, stay-away from school instructions, and unreasonable, unnecessary, and harmful restrictions on constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties to extract funds from Plaintiff.
- 41. After being retained by Plaintiff based upon Defendants' representations, Doyne stated that he used a "bag of tricks" to coerce his clients/patients into compliance with his profiteering agenda rather than seeking healthy, cooperative resolutions.
- 42. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne would utilize the "Caldwell Report" interpretive tool for the MMPI survey. The Caldwell report is a computer print-out similar to an astrology reading.
- 43. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne regularly dishonestly manipulated the "Caldwell Report" astrology reading to disfavor one or the other party.
- 44. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne fails to use any scientific methodology, which is generally accepted in the field of Psychology for the purposes which Defendants, and each of them, proscribed. For example, Defendants knew or had reason to know that Caldwell Report has been widely criticized, and even called "dangerous." Two notable family law specialists Cheryl L. Karp, Ph.D. and Leonard Karp, J.D. have described the problems with

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However, the MMPI must be interpreted in light of the biographical and other information about the client. "Blind interpretations," where nothing is known of the client except perhaps gender, may be useful for testing a psychologist's memory about the descriptive statements attached to certain individual scale elevations or certain profiles. They are not useful, and may be dangerous, in interpreting MMPI results for forensic work or any professional psychology work. other Computer use has brought other problems to the area of MMPI interpretation. Computer programs have been developed to allow computers to score the raw data ... produce the files in printed graph form, and do the work of fetching interpretative information from "cookbooks." Undeniably, the computers save valuable time for psychologists. Yet, their use with the MMPI has opened the way for some serious problems. This advanced technology lends an image of "truth" or "accuracy" to the printout results that may mislead even psychologists. Also, this technology is more readily available to non-psychologists than is wise. Persons with no or minimal training in psychology and psychological testing may use a computer report to make statements about a person's personality functioning that sound definitive or are presented as such. Even generally competent and respectable practitioners in fields normally thought to be "allied to" psychology, such as psychiatry or clinical social work, can make the grievous error of believing that they have acted responsibly or done a good job when they make conclusions about a client based solely or predominantly on the MMPI, using a computer to produce scores and interpretations. The MMPI needs to be interpreted in light of many factors often not considered by the computer programs. Computer programs frequently require only information about the client's sex, age, and achieved education level, not other factors such as current life experiences or environmental other life Furthermore, when used as part of a testing battery, the MMPI results must be integrated with all the testing and historical data and finally

interpreted in light of all of the psychologist's psychological knowledge. Doing this may alter the psychologist's original interpretation of the MMPI, as will be discussed below in the section on the interpretation of the Rorschach. Non-psychologists should not and usually cannot administer a whole test battery and interpret it appropriately. Secondly, many computer reports focus mainly on giving statements about the elevation of each individual scale, with perhaps cursory statements about the highest two scales considered together. Unfortunately, there is not a statement at the beginning of the computer printout explaining whether the statements are from research with a normal or abnormal population.

Source: ParentingPlan.net

- 45. Doyne was not "honest" and, in fact, regularly committed malpractice, fraud, extortion, and perjury.
- 46. Defendants knew or had reason to know of all of the above facts, including Doyne's dishonesty and manipulation.
- 47. Doyne was also not "thorough" as he frequently failed to review or analyze dozens of documents and abundant evidence presented to him, failed to review his clients' file, made reckless, false, and malicious recommendations clearly indicating he had not reviewed the file, and acted with oppression, fraud, and malice.
- 48. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne regularly refers clients to a select group of his professional colleagues to perform additional unnecessary, fraudulent, and/or harmful services such as intrusive and expensive supervised visitation, unnecessary child counseling, and supervision centers.
- 49. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne and his colleagues would attempt to entrap Plaintiff and/or his son in months or years of such extensive, unnecessary, and harmful services, draining him of financial resources.
- 50. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that many other alternatives to use of Doyne were preferable under these circumstances, including collaborative parenting education, "true" informal mediation, mediation with unbiased mediators, mediation with volunteer attorneys, mediation with less expensive mediators, mediation with individuals who waive all claims to

immunity, mediation with mediators who would agree to qualified immunity, attorney-toattorney "four way" informal negotiations, confidential counseling, as well as other alternative dispute resolution techniques.

- Doyne admitted that he was, in fact, not authorized to perform the activities that Defendants recommended him to perform and he attempted to perform, including unilaterally altering a custody schedule, changing the location of pick-ups and drop-offs, and imposing draconian burdens on the parties, which Doyne himself described as "handcuffs" and his "bag of tricks".
- 52. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne's pattern and practice in mediation and evaluation is in fact to encourage conflict between the parties by encouraging hostile behaviors, discouraging conciliatory behaviors, thereby prolonging the parties' conflict, increasing the number of sessions he would require the parties to attend to "resolve" the conflict he encouraged, charging more fees for his services, and thereby generating additional revenue for his practice at the Plaintiff's expense.
- 53. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that on information and belief Doyne's pattern and practice was to make false reports against his clients/patients to Child Protective Services, thereby using the trust placed in him as a mediator to jeopardize the Plaintiff's relationship with his child, then offer to modify or withdraw the false report in exchange for Plaintiff's payment to Doyne of more fees or otherwise "paying off" Doyne. On information and belief, Doyne has utilized such dishonest, subversive, and harmful techniques with many of his clients for decades, including with Defendants' clients. Defendants knew or had reason to know of such dishonest practices for years.
- 54. Defendants failed to disclose a conflict of interest in that they previously utilized Doyne in other client matters in which they or their clients paid Doyne thousands or tens of thousands of dollars in exchange for favorable opinions. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne would insist that Plaintiff comply with this "cash for custody" illegal extortion scheme.
- 55. Defendants failed to advise that Doyne was, in fact, an incompetent mediator, regularly made false statements under oath, regularly made false reports to CPS, regularly overcharged for his services, regularly charged breathtaking sums for unnecessary and harmful services, regularly billed for services he did not perform, regularly failed to meet the relevant professional standards in his profession of psychology, and otherwise regularly committed fraud and/or extortion on his

patients/clients, acted with oppression, fraud, and malice, imposed unnecessary and ineffective testing and other measures, and otherwise acted to extort and/or harm his patients/clients, and their children.

- 56. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that Doyne had violated state and federal patient/client and child privacy laws by disclosing confidential patient information to third parties and that he would do so in Plaintiff's matter. Defendant did make illegal, unethical, and inappropriate disclosures of private, privileged, and protected matters regarding Plaintiff.
- 57. After Plaintiff retained Doyne and advised Defendants of Doyne's incompetence and unprofessional behavior, Defendant Blanchet admitted that such behavior was "not unusual" for Doyne. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff how to remedy such misbehavior by immediately seeking to discharge Doyne and seek one or more of the other, more efficient and helpful ADR procedures described above.
- 58. Defendants further failed to advise Plaintiff of his right to trial by jury.
- 59. Defendants had significant prior knowledge of Doyne's track record of illegal, incompetent, and unethical behavior. After Plaintiff engaged Doyne, Defendant Blanchet admitted to Plaintiff that Doyne "usually forms his opinions first, then twists the facts to fit his opinion."
- 60. Defendants suggested that Plaintiff commit bribery by paying Doyne for his illegal, unnecessary, harmful, and fraudulent behavior to form an opinion in Plaintiff's favor.
- 61. When Plaintiff realized concerns regarding Doyne's failures to investigate or otherwise properly perform his duties, he consulted with Defendants. Defendants falsely advised Plaintiff that he could not to request to record all sessions with Doyne to create a record of Doyne's illegal behavior. In fact, Plaintiff had a right to record all such sessions. Defendants' misrepresentation was to Plaintiff's disadvantage in that Plaintiff was prevented from preserving evidence of Doyne's fraud and abuse.
- 62. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that by agreeing to mediate the action with Doyne, Plaintiff would severely compromise his rights to review Doyne's opinions and actions by judicial review, appeal, and by other professional oversight organizations.
- 63. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff that by agreeing to engage Doyne, that Doyne could commit any number of harmful, incompetent, malicious, fraudulent, and oppressive acts against Plaintiff and his child, and then seek to invoke "immunity" or "privilege" for such harmful,

incompetent, malicious, fraudulent, and oppressive acts.

- 64. Said failures actually and proximately caused Plaintiff damages in an amount to be proven at trial, but no less than \$1,000,000, accounting for the amount of money, time, and effort spent preparing for and attending sessions with Doyne, the amount of money paid to Doyne and the amount paid by Plaintiff to Defendants for Defendants' services relating to Doyne's emotional distress and punitive damages.
- 65. Defendants further failed to advise Plaintiff that on information and belief Doyne exhibited a pattern and practice of committing these fraudulent acts with dozens of other clients/patients as described in the attached Combined (1) Application For Leave To File As *Amici Curiae* And (2) amicus Brief Of Proposed *Amici Curiae*, (A) California Coalition For Families and Children (B) National Coalition For Men, In Support Of Plaintiff Dr. Emad Tadros' Motion To Continue Hearing And Conduct Discovery, attached hereto as Exhibit "D" and incorporated herein by reference.
- 66. Such acts and omissions were conducted with oppression, fraud, and malice.
- 67. On or about January, 2009, Judge Joel Wohlfeil, who had presided over this case for one year left the bench, to be replaced by Judge Lisa Schall.
- 68. Judge Lisa Schall has been reprimanded by the California Counsel for Judicial Excellence three times for inappropriate conduct, drunk driving, reckless driving, and abuse of discretion and was incompetent to sit in Plaintiff's family court matter.
- 69. At the time that Judge Schall entered the case, Defendants had knowledge of the above-referenced facts.
- 70. At the time Judge Schall entered the case, Defendants had a duty and opportunity to advise Plaintiff that he could file a pre-emptory "strike" against Judge Schall, removing her from the case.
- 71. Defendants failed to advise Plaintiff of Judge Schall's reprehensible track record as a judge.
- 72. Defendants further failed to advise Plaintiff that he could strike Judge Schall.
- 73. As an actual and proximate result, and in reliance on Defendants' failure to strike Judge Schall, Plaintiff failed to strike Judge Schall from the case.

74. As an actual and proximate result of Defendant's failure to advise Plaintiff to strike Judge Schall, Judge Schall proceeded to behave in exactly the same irresponsible manner she had previously behaved, issuing numerous recklessly irresponsible decisions, causing harm to Plaintiff in an exact amount to be proven at trial.

75. In performing the actions described hereinabove, Defendants acted with oppression, fraud, and malice.

Second Cause of Action: Intentional and Negligent Misrepresentation (Against all Defendants and Does 11-20)

- 76. Plaintiff incorporates herein paragraphs 1-75 above as if set forth fully herein.
- 77. The actions and representations described above were made intentionally, recklessly, and negligently.
- 78. The actions and representations described above were material.
- 79. The representations described above were reasonably relied on by Plaintiff in retaining Doyne and continuing to provide information to and work with Doyne, to pay Doyne and Defendants, and other acts in reliance thereon.
- 80. Said reliance by Plaintiff actually and proximately caused Plaintiff damages in an amount to be proven at trial, but no less than the amount of money, time, and effort spent preparing for and attending sessions with Doyne, the amount of money paid to Doyne, the amount billed by Defendants paid by Plaintiff for Defendants' services relating to Doyne, and cognizable emotional distress.
- 81. In performing the acts and missions described herein above, Defendants acted with oppression, fraud or malice.

Third Cause of Action: Intentional and Negligent Infliction of Emotional Distress (Against Defendants and Does 21-30)

- 82. Plaintiff incorporates herein paragraphs 1-81 above as if set forth fully herein.
- 83. Defendants' actions described hereinabove were intentional and/or negligent.
- 84. Defendants owed a duty of care to properly advise Plaintiff of the facts set forth herein above.
- 85. Defendants' actions described hereinabove actually and proximately caused Plaintiff emotional distress, loss of business opportunities, and loss of monies spent retaining Doyne and

1	charged by Defendants relating to Doyne.
	Fifth Cause of Action: Breach of Fiduciary Duties
3	(Against Defendants and Does 31-40)
4	86. Plaintiff incorporates herein paragraphs 1-85 above as if set forth fully herein.
5	87. Defendants, as attorneys for Plaintiff, owed Plaintiff a fiduciary duty to preserve and
6	protect Plaintiff's interests, rights, and opportunities.
7	88. Defendants, by virtue of the actions and failures to act described hereinabove, breached
8	said fiduciary duties.
9	89. As an actual and proximate result of Defendants' breach of fiduciary duties described
10	above, Plaintiff has been injured in an amount to be proven at trial.
11	90. In breaching said fiduciary duties, Defendants acted with oppression, fraud, or malice.
12	Fifth Cause of Action: Unfair Business Practices pursuant to California
13	Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.
14	(Against Defendants and Does 41-50)
15	91. Plaintiff incorporates herein paragraphs 1-90 above as if set forth fully herein.
16	92. Defendants, by virtue of the actions and failures to act described hereinabove, committed
17	violations of California Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.
18	93. As an actual and proximate result of Defendants' violation of said Business and
19	Professions code described above, Plaintiff has been injured in an amount to be proven at trial.
20	94. In breaching said Business and Professions Code provisions, Defendants acted with
21	oppression, fraud, or malice.
22	95. On November 25, 2009, Plaintiff delivered a demand letter to Defendants, detailing the
23	breaches and violations described hereinabove. Plaintiff requested Defendants'
24	acknowledgement of and response to said claims. Defendant failed and refused to comply with
25	Plaintiff's reasonable requests. As a result, Plaintiff has been forced to file this lawsuit.
26	Prayer for Relief:
27	Plaintiff hereby prays for relief as follows:
	1. For damages in excess of \$100,000, the exact amount to be proven at trial;
28	2. For interest, attorney's fees, and costs of suit incurred herein;

1	3. For injunctive relief preventing Defendants from causing such further injuries to Plaintiff
2	and other clients of Defendants;
3	4. For additional remedial measures requiring Defendants to strictly adhere to the
4	professional standards to which they are bound by law and submit to an annual audit by
	Plaintiff for compliance w/same; and
5	5. For punitive and exemplary damages in an amount to be proven at trial;
6	6. For such further and other relief as this Court deems just and proper.
7	Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury.
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10	Dated: December 31, 2009 Lexevia, PC
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12	By:
13	Colbern C. Stuart III, Esq.
14	Attorney for Plaintiff
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VERIFICATION

I verify under penalty of perjury that the facts alleged in the foregoing complaint are true and correct to the best of my information, knowledge and/or belief.

Dated: December 31, 2009

BY:

COLBERN C. STUART UI,

Plaintiff