

BEFORE THE PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE

**IN THE MATTER OF A MEMBER
OF THE STATE BAR OF
ARIZONA**

**GREGORY K. CECILIA
Bar No. 027954,

Respondent.**

PDJ 2025-9105

**FINAL JUDGMENT AND
ORDER**

[State Bar No. 25-1407]

FILED MAY 8, 2026

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge having accepted the parties' Agreement for Discipline by Consent ("Agreement") submitted pursuant to Rule 57(a), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.,

IT IS ORDERED that **GREGORY K. CECILIA, Bar No. 027954**, is suspended for a period of sixty (60) days for his conduct in violation of the Arizona Rules of Professional Conduct.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to Rule 57(a)(5)(B), Respondent shall immediately comply with the requirements of Rule 72, Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., relating to notification of clients and others.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Gregory K. Cecilia is placed on Probation for a period of two (2) years. The terms of probation shall include:

1. Lawyer Regulation Office (“LRO”) Member Assistance Program (“MAP”):

a. Respondent Cecilia shall contact the State Bar Compliance Monitor at (602)340-7258, within 10 days from the date of service of this Order to schedule an assessment.

b. The Compliance Monitor shall develop terms and conditions of participation if the results of the assessment so indicate, and the terms, including reporting requirements, shall be incorporated herein.

c. Mr. Cecilia will be responsible for any costs associated with MAP participation and compliance.

2. Mr. Cecilia shall not commit any further violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct or Rules of the Supreme Court of Arizona.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Gregory K. Cecilia shall pay the costs and expenses of the State Bar of Arizona in the amount of \$1,810.75

within 30 days. There are no costs or expenses incurred by the Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge in these proceedings.

DATED this 8th day of May, 2026.

Lisa A. VandenBerg
Hon. Lisa A. VandenBerg
Presiding Disciplinary Judge

Copy of the foregoing emailed
this 8th day of May, 2026, to:

Stephen Little
LRO@staff.azbar.org

Kara R. Lavy
kara@lavylaw.com
Respondent's Counsel

by: CLopez

BEFORE THE PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE

**IN THE MATTER OF A MEMBER
OF THE STATE BAR OF ARIZONA**

**GREGORY K. CECILIA
Bar No. 027954,**

Respondent.

PDJ 2025-9105

**ORDER ACCEPTING
AGREEMENT FOR
DISCIPLINE BY CONSENT**

[State Bar No. 25-1407]

FILED MAY 8, 2026

On May 4, 2026, the parties filed an Agreement for Discipline by Consent (“Agreement”) pursuant to Rule 57(a), Arizona Rules of Supreme Court (“Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.”). The State Bar of Arizona is represented by Senior Bar Counsel Stephen Little. Respondent Gregory K. Cecilia is represented by Counsel Kara R. Lavy. The Agreement seeks to address State Bar No. 25-1407. A formal complaint was filed on December 31, 2025.¹

Contingent upon approval of the proposed form of discipline, Mr. Cecilia voluntarily waives his right to an adjudicatory hearing, as well as all motions, defenses, objections, or requests that could be asserted.

¹ The Attorney Discipline Probable Cause Committee (“ADPCC”) entered an order of probable cause on November 18, 2025.

Pursuant to Rule 53(c)(3), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., the State Bar provided Notice of the Agreement and an opportunity to file a written objection to the Complainant by email on April 30, 2026. The Agreement indicates the Complainant, Stephen Fenn does not object to the Agreement.

The Agreement details a factual basis in support of Respondent's conditional admissions and is incorporated by reference.² Respondent Gregory K. Cecilia conditionally admits his conduct violated Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., Rule 42, ER 8.4(c) (engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation). As a sanction, the parties agree to suspension for a period of sixty (60) days and probation for a period of two (2) years. Mr. Cecilia also agrees to pay the costs and expenses of the disciplinary proceeding, within 30 days from the date of this order.

The State Bar has agreed to dismiss the allegation that Respondent Cecilia violated ER 3.4(b) [fairness to opposing party -falsifying evidence] and 8.4(a)/3.3(a)(3) [attempt to violate ER 3.3(a)(3)]. Restitution is not an issue in this matter.

² See Rule 57(a), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.

Generally speaking, the issue arose while Mr. Cecilia was employed as an attorney with the Bureau of Prisons ("BOP"). While assisting in litigation, Mr. Cecilia used a prior draft declaration of the plaintiff inmate's disciplinary history to produce a "new draft" declaration which reflected the Acting Special Investigative Agent's ("Agent") signature. However, said signature was never obtained from the Agent. Mr. Cecilia speculated it was already on the prior draft, erroneously leaving it on the "new" draft produced. When asked by a supervisor to provide the e-mail from the Agent, Mr. Cecilia altered an email chain adding a header to suggest that the Agent had signed off, which in reality did not occur or exist. When asked to produce a copy of the actual full email, Mr. Cecilia indicated he looked for the email but could not find it and that he may have accidentally deleted the email.

Sanctions imposed against lawyers "shall be determined in accordance with the American Bar Association's *Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions*" ("ABA Standards"). Rule 58(k), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. In reviewing this Agreement, the PDJ has considered the duties violated, the

lawyer's mental state, the actual or potential injury caused by the misconduct, and the existence of aggravating and mitigating factors.

The Agreement reflects that Mr. Cecilia knowingly violated his duty to the client resulting in potential harm to the client.

The Agreement relies on ABA *Standard 4.6 (Lack of Candor)* as the appropriate *Standard* given the facts and circumstances of this matter. *Standard 4.6*³ provides,

Suspension is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly deceives a client, and causes injury or potential injury to the client.

The Agreement identifies two (2) aggravating factors: 9.22(b) dishonest motive; and 9.22(i) substantial experience in the practice of law;⁴ and two (2) mitigating factors: 9.32(a) absence of a prior disciplinary record; and 9.32(c) personal or emotional problems.⁵ Given the nature of the violation that Mr. Cecilia has admitted to knowingly committing, the PDJ

³ While the Agreement simply reflects Standard 4.6 on page 6, the PDJ finds that it was a Scribner's error to have omitted the "2".

⁴ Respondent was first admitted to practice law in Arizona on October 22, 2010.

⁵ See Exhibit C filed separately under seal.

does not find the described personal or emotional problems demonstrates a causal connection and therefore will not consider such in her analysis.

In considering the ethics rule violated, the ABA *Standards* and the weight of the remaining mitigation and aggravation factors, the PDJ is reminded that, “the object of lawyer discipline is not to punish the lawyer, but to protect the public, the profession and the administration of justice.” *In re Peasley*, 208 Ariz. 27 (2004). Mr. Cecila would be wise to dedicate his time while on suspension and probation as an opportunity to deeply reflect, perhaps with the assistance of therapy, on the weakness that led to this misconduct to ensure that he does not commit an act of dishonesty in the future. It is his lack of prior discipline alone, that causes the PDJ to conclude that the Agreement achieves, at least the minimum, protections to the public and the other recognized purposes of the lawyer discipline process. Therefore,

IT IS ORDERED accepting the Agreement for Discipline by Consent under seal. A final judgment and order is separately filed this date.

DATED this 8th day of May, 2026.

Lisa A. VandenBerg

**Hon. Lisa A. Vandenberg
Presiding Disciplinary Judge**

Copy of the foregoing e-mailed
this 8th day of May, 2026 to:

Stephen Little
LRO@staff.azbar.org

Kara R. Lavy
kara@lavylaw.com
Respondent's Counsel

by: CLopez

C.LOPEZ

DISCIPLINARY CLERK

Stephen Little, Bar No. 023336
Senior Bar Counsel
State Bar of Arizona
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Telephone (602) 340-7247
Email: LRO@staff.azbar.org

Kara R. Lavy Esq., Bar No. 034982
Lavy Law
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Scottsdale, AZ 85251-1257
Email: kara@lavylaw.com
Respondent's Counsel

BEFORE THE PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE**IN THE MATTER OF A MEMBER
OF THE STATE BAR OF ARIZONA,****GREGORY K. CECILIA
Bar No. 027954**

Respondent.

PDJ 2025-9105**AGREEMENT FOR DISCIPLINE
BY CONSENT**State Bar File No. **25-1407**

The State Bar of Arizona, and Respondent Gregory K. Cecilia who is represented in this matter by counsel, Kara R. Lavy Esq., hereby submit their Agreement for Discipline by Consent pursuant to Rule 57(a), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. A probable cause order was entered on November 18, 2025. A formal complaint was filed December 31, 2025. Respondent voluntarily waives the right to an adjudicatory hearing, unless otherwise ordered, and waives all motions, defenses, objections or

requests which have been made or raised, or could be asserted thereafter, if the conditional admission and proposed form of discipline is approved.

Pursuant to Rule 53(c)(3), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., notice of this agreement was provided to the complainant, Stephen Fenn, by email on April 30, 2026. Mr. Fenn was notified of the opportunity to file a written objection to the agreement with the State Bar, but has indicated that he does not object to the Consent Agreement.

Respondent conditionally admits that his conduct, as set forth below, violated Rule 42, ER 8.4(c). Upon acceptance of this agreement, Respondent agrees to accept imposition of the following discipline: **Sixty (60) days Suspension**, and upon reinstatement shall be placed on two (2) years Probation. Respondent also agrees to pay the costs and expenses of the disciplinary proceeding, within 30 days from the date of this order. If costs are not paid within the 30 days interest will begin to accrue at the legal rate.¹ The State Bar's Statement of Costs and Expenses is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

FACTS

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

¹ Respondent understands that the costs and expenses of the disciplinary proceeding include the costs and expenses of the State Bar of Arizona, the Disciplinary Clerk, the Probable Cause Committee, the Presiding Disciplinary Judge and the Supreme Court of Arizona.

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a lawyer licensed to practice law in the state of Arizona having been first admitted to practice in Arizona on October 22, 2010.

COUNT ONE (File no. 25-1407/Fenn)

2. In 2022, inmate Jeremy Pinson (“Pinson”) filed a civil rights lawsuit against the Bureau of Prisons (“BOP”) and various BOP employees – *Pinson v. Carvajal*, No. 22-cv-298 (D.Ariz.).

3. Respondent was employed as an attorney with the BOP and tasked with assisting, as agency counsel, Assistant US Attorney Sarah Letzkus (“Letzkus”), who was lead counsel defending the BOP defendants.

4. On August 3, 2023, Letzkus told Respondent that she needed a declaration with Pinson’s disciplinary history for a pleading she intended to file with the court.

5. On August 23, 2023, Respondent asked his legal assistant, Lorri Mitchell (“Mitchell”), for a previously compiled declaration detailing Pinson’s disciplinary history so that he would not have to “start from scratch.” Mitchell emailed Respondent a prior February 16, 2023, declaration of BOP Acting Special Investigative Agent Jeremy Ulrich (“Ulrich”).

6. Utilizing either that prior draft or another prior draft of a declaration by Ulrich that Respondent located on the computer system, Respondent produced a new draft declaration by Ulrich.

7. Respondent did not obtain Ulrich's signature on the draft declaration, however the draft Respondent produced contained Ulrich's signature, which Respondent speculates was already on the prior draft he worked from and which Respondent speculates he erroneously left on the draft he produced.

8. On August 24, 2023, Respondent emailed the Ulrich declaration in PDF format to Letzkus.

9. Because Ulrich had stopped signing declarations in June of 2023, Respondent's supervisor, Clay Cook ("Cook"), reached out to Ulrich and asked if he had completed the August 24th declaration. Ulrich responded that he had not.

10. On August 29, 2023, Cook asked Respondent to send him "the e-mail from Lt. Ulrich where he signed off on the 8/24/2023 declaration."

11. Respondent edited the August 23, 2023, email chain from Mitchell to himself by adding another email header to it that purported to show an email from Ulrich to Respondent dated August 24, 2023. In reality, no such email from Ulrich to Respondent occurred or existed.

12. On August 29, 2023, Respondent sent Cook the fabricated email chain that falsely showed an August 24, 2023, email from Ulrich to Respondent.

13. Cook forwarded the fabricated email chain to Ulrich to ask about its legitimacy. Ulrich again denied signing the declaration and confirmed he never sent any emails to Respondent on August 24, 2023. Ulrich indicated this was the first time he was seeing the emails and was baffled how the email chain showed him sending something to Respondent, as he had no contact with Respondent regarding the declaration.

14. On August 29, 2023, Cook asked Respondent for a copy of the actual full August 24, 2023, email from Ulrich, since what Respondent had previously sent only showed the forwarded header in a chain.

15. Respondent responded to Cook's inquiry, indicating that he looked for the email but could not find it. Respondent speculated he may have accidentally deleted the email.

16. On September 1, 2023, Cook sent the August 24, 2023, Ulrich declaration to Ulrich and directly asked him whether he had reviewed and signed it. Ulrich replied that he had not.

17. Cook then instructed Letzkus not to use the Ulrich declaration Respondent had provided and a new declaration was authored, which was ultimately filed instead of the Ulrich declaration. Accordingly, the Ulrich declaration was never actually filed with the court.

18. Respondent's conduct in this count violated Rule 42 Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., ER 8.4(c).

CONDITIONAL ADMISSIONS

Respondent's admissions are being tendered in exchange for the form of discipline stated below and are submitted freely and voluntarily and not as a result of coercion or intimidation. Respondent conditionally admits that he violated Rule 42, Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., specifically ER 8.4(c).

CONDITIONAL DISMISSALS

There are no counts being dismissed. The State Bar is dismissing the allegations that Respondent violated ER 3.4(b) and 8.4(a)/3.3(a)(3) [attempt to violate ER 3.3(a)(3)]. These dismissals are made on the basis of the factual information developed throughout the litigation and the agreed to factual allegations as listed supra.

RESTITUTION

Restitution is not an issue in this matter.

SANCTION

Respondent and the State Bar of Arizona agree that based on the facts and circumstances of this matter, as set forth above, the following sanctions are appropriate: **Suspension of sixty (60) days, and two (2) years probation. Upon reinstatement, the terms of probation will consist of:**

1. LRO MAP: Respondent shall contact the State Bar Compliance Monitor at (602) 340-7258, within 10 days from the date of service of this Order, to schedule an assessment. The Compliance Monitor shall develop terms and conditions of participation if the results of the assessment so indicate and the terms, including reporting requirements, shall be incorporated herein. Respondent will be responsible for any costs associated with participation with compliance.

Respondent shall commit no further violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

NON-COMPLIANCE LANGUAGE

If Respondent fails to comply with any of the foregoing probation terms and the State Bar of Arizona receives information thereof, Bar Counsel shall file a notice of noncompliance with the Presiding Disciplinary Judge, pursuant to Rule 60(a)(5), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. The Presiding Disciplinary Judge may conduct a hearing within 30 days to determine whether Respondent breached a term of probation and, if so, to recommend an appropriate sanction. If the State Bar alleges that Respondent failed to comply with any of the foregoing terms the burden of proof shall be on the State Bar of Arizona to prove noncompliance by a preponderance of the evidence.

If Respondent violates any of the terms of this agreement, the State Bar may bring further discipline proceedings.

LEGAL GROUNDS IN SUPPORT OF SANCTION

In determining an appropriate sanction, the parties consulted the American Bar Association's *Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions (Standards)* pursuant to Rule 57(a)(2)(E). The *Standards* are designed to promote consistency in the imposition of sanctions by identifying relevant factors that courts should consider and then applying those factors to situations where lawyers have engaged in various types of misconduct. *Standard 1.3, In re Pappas*, 159 Ariz. 516, 768 P.2d 1161 (1988). The *Standards* provide guidance with respect to an appropriate sanction in this matter.

In determining an appropriate sanction, the Court considers the duty violated, the lawyer's mental state, the actual or potential injury caused by the misconduct and the existence of aggravating and mitigating factors. *Standard 3.0*.

The parties agree that the following *Standard, 4.6 Lack of Candor*, is the appropriate *Standard* given the facts and circumstances of this matter: *Standard 4.6 Lack of Candor* provides that suspension is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly deceives a client, and causes injury or potential injury to the client.

The duty violated

Respondent's conduct violated his duty to the client.

The lawyer's mental state

Respondent conduct was knowing.

The extent of the actual or potential injury

There was potential harm to the client.

Aggravating and mitigating circumstances

The presumptive sanction is suspension. The parties conditionally agree that the following aggravating and mitigating factors should be considered:

In aggravation:

- a) 9.22(b) dishonest motive;
- b) 9.22(i) substantial experience in the practice of law;
 - a. Respondent was admitted in 2010

In mitigation:

- a) 9.32(a) absence of a prior disciplinary record;
 - a. Respondent has no prior discipline
- b) 9.32(c) personal or emotional problems
 - a. Mitigation materials are being filed separately under seal as Exhibit C

Discussion

The presumptive sanction should remain suspension. Based on the *Standards* and in light of the facts and circumstances of this matter, the parties conditionally agree that the sanction set forth above is within the range of appropriate sanction and will serve the purposes of lawyer discipline.

CONCLUSION

The object of lawyer discipline is not to punish the lawyer, but to protect the public, the profession and the administration of justice. In re *Peasley*, 208 Ariz. 27 (2004). Recognizing that determination of the appropriate sanction is the prerogative of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge, the State Bar and Respondent believe that the objectives of discipline will be met by the imposition of the proposed sanction of Suspension with Probation and the imposition of costs and expenses. A proposed form of order is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

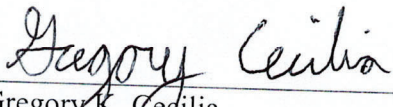
DATED this 4th day of May, 2026.

STATE BAR OF ARIZONA

/s/Stephen P. Little
Stephen P. Little
Senior Bar Counsel

This agreement, with conditional admissions, is submitted freely and voluntarily and not under coercion or intimidation. I acknowledge my duty under the Rules of the Supreme Court with respect to discipline and reinstatement. I understand these duties may include notification of clients, return of property and other rules pertaining to suspension.

DATED this 4 day of May, 2026.



Gregory K. Cecilia
Respondent

DATED this _____ day of May, 2026.

Lavy Law

Kara R. Lavy Esq.
Counsel for Respondent

Approved as to form and content

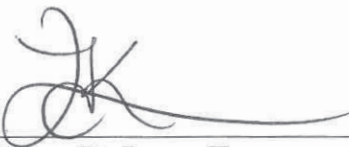
Maret Vessella
Chief Bar Counsel

DATED this _____ day of May, 2026.

Gregory K. Cecilia
Respondent

DATED this 4 day of May, 2026.

Lavy Law

_____

Kara R. Lavy Esq.
Counsel for Respondent

Approved as to form and content

/s/Maret Vessella
Maret Vessella
Chief Bar Counsel

Original filed with the Disciplinary Clerk of
the Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge
of the Supreme Court of Arizona
this 4th day of May, 2026.

Copy of the foregoing emailed
this 4th day of May, 2026, to:

Honorable Lisa A. VandenBerg
Presiding Disciplinary Judge
Supreme Court of Arizona
1501 West Washington Street, Suite 102
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
E-mail: officepdj@courts.az.gov

Kara R. Lavy Esq.
Lavy Law
7150 E CAMELBACK RD
Scottsdale, AZ 85251-1257
Email: kara@lavylaw.com
Respondent's Counsel

Lawyer Regulation Records Manager
State Bar of Arizona
4201 N. 24th St., Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85016-6266
LRO@staff.azbar.org

by: /s/Melissa Duarte
SPL/md

EXHIBIT A
(Statement of Costs)

Statement of Costs and Expenses

In the Matter of a Member of
The State Bar of Arizona, Gregory K. Cecilia
Bar No. 027954, Respondent.

File No. 25-1407

Administrative Expenses

The Supreme Court of Arizona has adopted a schedule of administrative expenses to be assessed in lawyer discipline. If the number of charges/complainants exceeds five, the assessment for the general administrative expenses shall increase by 20% for each additional charge/complainant where a violation is admitted or proven.

Factors considered in the administrative expense are time expended by staff bar counsel, paralegal, secretaries, typists, file clerks and messenger; and normal postage charges, telephone costs, office supplies and all similar factors generally attributed to office overhead. As a matter of course, administrative costs will increase based on the length of time it takes a matter to proceed through the adjudication process.

General Administrative Expenses for above-numbered proceedings

\$ 1,200.00

Additional costs incurred by the State Bar of Arizona in the processing of this disciplinary matter, and not included in administrative expenses, are itemized below.

Additional Costs

03/24/26	Alliance Reporting, Deposition of Respondent	\$ 610.75
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Total for additional costs	<u>\$ 610.75</u>
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<u>TOTAL COSTS AND EXPENSES INCURRED</u>	<u>\$ 1,810.75</u>
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EXHIBIT B
(Proposed Order)

BEFORE THE PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE

**IN THE MATTER OF A MEMBER
OF THE STATE BAR OF ARIZONA,**

**GREGORY K. CECILIA
Bar No. 027954**

Respondent.

PDJ 2025-9105

**FINAL JUDGMENT AND
ORDER**

State Bar No. 25-1407

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge of the Supreme Court of Arizona, having reviewed the Agreement for Discipline by Consent pursuant to Rule 57(a), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., accepts the parties' proposed agreement.

Accordingly:

IT IS ORDERED that Respondent, **Gregory K. Cecilia**, is Suspended for sixty (60) days for his conduct in violation of the Arizona Rules of Professional Conduct, as outlined in the consent documents, effective 30 days from the date of this order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, upon reinstatement, Respondent shall be placed on probation for a period of two (2) years **the terms of probation which will consist of:**

1. LRO MAP: Respondent shall contact the State Bar Compliance Monitor at (602) 340-7258, within 10 days from the date of service of this Order, to schedule an assessment. The Compliance Monitor shall develop terms and conditions of participation if the results of the assessment so indicate and the terms, including reporting requirements, shall be incorporated herein. Respondent will be responsible for any costs associated with participation with compliance.

Respondent shall commit no further violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall be subject to any additional terms imposed by the Presiding Disciplinary Judge as a result of reinstatement hearings held.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to Rule 72 Ariz. R. Sup. Ct., Respondent shall immediately comply with the requirements relating to notification of clients and others.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent pay the costs and expenses of the State Bar of Arizona in the amount of \$ _____, within 30 days from

the date of service of this Order. If not paid within the 30 days interest will begin to accrue at the legal rate.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall pay the costs and expenses incurred by the disciplinary clerk and/or Presiding Disciplinary Judge's Office in connection with these disciplinary proceedings in the amount of _____, within 30 days from the date of service of this Order. If not paid within the 30 days interest will begin to accrue at the legal rate.

DATED this _____ day of May, 2026.

**Honorable Lisa A. VandenBerg,
Presiding Disciplinary Judge**

Original filed with the Disciplinary Clerk of
the Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge
of the Supreme Court of Arizona
this _____ day of May, 2026.

Copies of the foregoing emailed
this _____ day of May, 2026, to:

Kara R. Lavy Esq.
Lavy Law
7150 E CAMELBACK RD
Scottsdale, AZ 85251-1257
Email: kara@lavylaw.com
Respondent's Counsel

Stephen P. Little
Senior Bar Counsel
State Bar of Arizona
4201 N 24th Street, Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85016-6266
Email: LRO@staff.azbar.org

by: _____

EXHIBIT C
(Mitigation Evidence – Filed Separately Under Seal)