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1	IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
2	COUNTY DEPARTMENT - LAW DIVISION
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4	PAUL R. DULBERG, Individually,)
5	and THE PAUL R. DULBERG)
6	REVOCABLE TRUST,)
7	Plaintiffs,)
8	vs.) No. 2022 L 010905
9	KELLY N. BAUDIN, et al.,
10	Defendants.)
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14	VIDEOCONFERENCE COURT HEARING
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16	MAY 25TH, 2023
17	COMMENCING AT 10:30 A.M.
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19	BEFORE: HONORABLE MICHAEL F. OTTO
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23	
24	REPORTED BY: Linda S. Idrizi, CSR NO. 84-3704.

	Page 2
1	APPEARANCES:
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3	ALPHONSE TALARICO LAW OFFICES,
4	(707 Skokie Boulevard, Suite 600,
5	Northbrook, Illinois 60062), by:
6	MR. ALPHONSE A. TALARICO,
7	contact@lawofficeofalphonsetalarico.com,
8	appeared on behalf of the Plaintiff;
9	
10	LEWIS BRISBOIS BISGAARD & SMITH, LLP,
11	(550 West Adams Street, Suite 300,
12	Chicago, Illinois 60661), by:
13	MR. JASON W. JOCHUM,
14	jason.jochum@lewisbrisbois.com,
15	appeared on behalf of Defendants;
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	Page 3
1	APPEARANCES:
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3	CHAPMAN SPINGOLA, LLP,
4	(190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 3850,
5	Chicago, Illinois 60603), by:
6	MR. ROBERT CHAPMAN,
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10	AMUNDSEN DAVIS,
11	(150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 3300,
12	Chicago, Illinois 60601), by:
13	MS. MICHELLE E. Tinajero,
14	mtinajero@smithamundsen.com,
15	appeared on behalf of the Defendants.
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THE COURT: Good morning, everybody. This is
Dulberg versus Baudin, 2022 L 10905. I'm Judge
Michael Otto. We are up today for a hearing on a
couple of different fully briefed motions to
dismiss.

And then I believe I also need to set a briefing schedule on other motions that have been filed, but we will do all of that -- we will go through all of that after everybody introduces themselves for the record, please, starting with Plaintiff's counsel.

MR. TALARICO: Good morning, your Honor.

Good morning, Counsel. My name is Alphonse

Talarico. I represent the Plaintiff, Paul Dulberg.

THE COURT: And also the Dulberg Revocable Trust; correct?

MR. TALARICO: Correct, yes.

THE COURT: Okay. Who is here for any of the movants on the fully briefed motions?

MR. CHAPMAN: Good morning, your Honor. Robert Chapman on behalf of ADR Systems.

MR. JOCHUM: And good morning, your Honor.

Jason Jochum, J-O-C-H-U-M, on behalf of the

24 Defendants Joseph Olsen, Raphael Yalden and Craig

Page 5

Willette. And I am going to refer to them collectively as the Olsen Defendants, which we referred to them in our motions.

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THE COURT: Good morning to everyone so far.

And Miss Tinajero.

MS. TINAJERO: Good morning, Judge. Michelle Tinajero on behalf of Allstate.

THE COURT: Okay. And no one here for the Baudin Defendants at this time?

MR. TALARICO: Doesn't appear that way.

THE COURT: All right. We will cross that bridge when we come to it. Why don't we go ahead with the motions to dismiss that are up today for hearing. Unless the parties have agreed otherwise, I am fine with starting with ADR and going in alphabetical order.

I will say at the outset that as to both ADR's motion to dismiss and we are going to call it the Olsen Defendants, the Olsen Defendants' motion to dismiss, I have read all of the briefs, motion in response, reply, reviewed the exhibits that the parties have cited and considered the authority on which the parties have relied.

So nobody should feel that they need

to read their brief to me, but if anybody has anything they want to highlight, especially since we do have a court reporter here, I would, of course, give both sides a chance to be heard.

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So, Mr. Chapman, you will have the first and last word on your motion. Please go ahead when you are ready.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, your Honor. I will be very brief in light of the fact that you have reviewed everything.

From our perspective, your Honor, our motion is very straightforward. I am going to assume you know who ADR Systems is and that we are in the mediation and arbitration business.

There was a bankruptcy by Mr. Dulberg. The trustee assumed control of his personal injury claim. There was a motion presented in the bankruptcy court that approved a binding mediation at ADR Systems.

As Mr. Talarico states in Exhibit 10 to his complaint is a binding mediation agreement with ADR Systems, following which is executed by the Baudin attorneys.

It is unclear to me if Mr. Talarico is

disputing that Mr. Dulberg's signature is on the document, but that's neither here nor there as the bankruptcy court approved the mediation with a high-low agreement.

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The mediation occurred. Judge Etchingham retired, oversaw the binding mediation. He entered an award of \$560,000 in Mr. Dulberg's favor.

There was a high-low agreement. The bankruptcy court record, which the court can take judicial notice of, the payment was made by Allstate, I believe. The proceeds from the mediation were then distributed, including \$117,000 to Mr. Dulberg.

In sum, we are in the mediation business. There was a mediation agreement. Judge Etchingham ruled consistent with the mediation agreement and the parties performed in accordance with that mediation agreement, which the bankruptcy court had directed the trustee to enter into as he saw necessary.

Under those circumstances, you Honor,

I don't think there is any allegation in the

complaint, as we state in our pleadings, that would

support any type of claim that ADR breached the agreement. It's that straightforward. There are no allegations of breach in the agreement.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Chapman.

Mr. Talarico.

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MR. TALARICO: A quick response, Judge.

There were two agreements, two different exhibits attached to the complaint.

The breach that we are alleging is that ADR as a third-party to the contract breached their own terms.

The terms of which we are talking about specifically -- I don't have them in front of me, but what they require is that if a contract which has been made and -- made and it's gotten changed, it has to be -- the changes have to be approved by the parties and ADR.

There was a change. The terms of the contract are different. And there is no evidence of approval by ADR.

THE COURT: Mr. Talarico, the first contract was not executed.

MR. TALARICO: Correct.

THE COURT: So if I am understanding

correctly, your theory is that ADR is bound by the terms of the unexecuted contract and they breached the unexecuted contract by ultimately performing under the contract that the parties did execute.

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MR. TALARICO: That's not exactly what I'm trying to say. I will try again, Judge, and forgive me if I am not being clear.

The unsigned one that was presented to the bankruptcy judge has a term in it. And the term -- one of the terms, which makes it very interesting, it says that payments have to be made on a scheduled basis. And one of the dates that's included is November 21st, 2016. I think I addressed that.

Now, the contract, we don't know yet whether there was a signed contract at that point, but the terms of the one that was presented to the bankruptcy court, okay, required, again, by November 21st, payments of somewhere around 2, \$3,000 be made in advance.

I also believe that means under discovery there was a signed contract prior to the one that they -- that was presented on December 8th.

A contract was presented on December 8th, the day of the hearing, but that also had the term you must pay -- I don't remember, 2 to \$3,000 by November 21st.

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Judge, how could there not have been a first contract if the December 8th one that they filed has a term requiring a payment of November 21st?

THE COURT: So, again, I'm not sure that that addresses the concern that I suspect was evident from my question.

You are seeking to hold them to an unsigned contract. Right now you are saying maybe there was a different signed contract and we just don't know, but you pled nothing about that.

MR. TALARICO: What I am trying to say was the contract that was presented to the bankruptcy judge was a contract that was on ADR's stationary. It had terms. It had money that ADR was entitled to. It had fees on it. All of those things got changed on the second contract.

THE COURT: I understand, but the first contract was never signed.

MR. TALARICO: We don't know that, Judge. We

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1 know that that was the contract that was submitted.

THE COURT: Sure. So let me say it a different way. The only contract that you have presented as an exhibit to support your theory that

MR. TALARICO: We presented the December 8th contract, also, Judge, that was signed. And that

there was a breach is an unsigned version?

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THE COURT: Mr. Talarico, if you want to quibble --

MR. TALARICO: No, I don't. Not at all.

12 THE COURT: You understand the point that I
13 am making, do you not?

MR. TALARICO: I'm not sure, Judge.

THE COURT: Wait a minute, Mr. Talarico. I will try to make it even more plain. You say that the contract that was presented to the bankruptcy court differed from the contract that was ultimately performed; correct?

MR. TALARICO: Correct.

THE COURT: But the bankruptcy court version of the contract, the version that was presented to the bankruptcy court, was unsigned; correct.

MR. TALARICO: Correct.

1 THE COURT: Okay. Anything else?

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MR. TALARICO: Yes. The one that was signed also had that same clause requiring payment by November 21st of that year where that contract, which is now a signed contract, took place on December 8th. I don't know how that can happen.

And, Judge, just one last sentence, that's all, and then I will end it. The terms -- it's not just the fact that it says November 21st, but that any changes to contracts have to be approved by ADR.

And the December 8th contract was not approved by ADR. It was signed and there was a hearing. It doesn't -- I don't understand how it could possibly be both.

THE COURT: How it could be both, what?

MR. TALARICO: The only contract requiring a payment of dollars weeks or months in advance of the contract being signed.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Chapman, you have the last word, if you wish.

MR. CHAPMAN: Your Honor, unless you have any questions, we will just rely on our briefs.

Page 13

THE COURT: That's fine. Thank you,
Mr. Chapman.

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The motion is granted. I do not see any sufficient allegations of breach of any term of the contract against ADR in the complaint as pled.

The notion that they are bound by a contract which was unsigned is untenable. And the complete speculation that there was a previous signed version of the contract is just that. Not only is it speculation, but it doesn't even appear in the complaint. The motion is granted.

MR. CHAPMAN: Your Honor, thank you very much. I think I have stated both in my initial brief and my reply brief that we would like the dismissal to be with prejudice.

I can't imagine any allegations that would allow this -- a claim to go forward. And we would like it to be with prejudice, to have the requisite Rule 304(A) language since there are other claims still pending.

THE COURT: I am skeptical, as well, but I think it's fair to give the Plaintiffs an opportunity to replead, if they have grounds for asserting some of the theories or some of the facts

that were alluded to today, I will give leave to replead it. At this time I am not going to dismiss it with prejudice. I will give 21 days to replead.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

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Let's move to the Olsen Defendants' motion to dismiss. Let's see, Mr. Jochum, again, I have read motions, response and reply, but I do want to give both sides a chance to be heard. You will have the first and last word. Please go ahead when you are ready.

MR. JOCHUM: Thank you, your Honor. Similar to Mr. Chapman, I will just have a few, brief arguments, and then if your Honor has any questions, I am glad to address them.

Plainly put, the Olsen Defendants were appointed as a bankruptcy trustee of Mr. Dulberg's bankruptcy in August of 2016.

There was an approval of the mediation agreement October 31st, 2016, by the bankruptcy court that Mr. Olsen presented. And the mediation occurred on December 8th, 2016 with the award entered on December 12th, 2016.

As we noted in our motion to dismiss,

this claim is barred by the statute of limitations and the statute of repose. There is no question of fact that Mr. Dulberg knew of his injury and that it was allegedly wrongfully caused when the award was entered on December 12th of 2016.

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In fact, he emailed the Baudin

Defendants' attorneys as noted in Paragraph 57 of
his complaint. "You guys did good. I just feel
like I gave these people \$261,000." I am
paraphrasing, but that's essentially what he
stated.

He knew of his injury. He knew he was coerced into participating into this mediation.

His claim arose then. He didn't file suit within two years.

I just want to briefly address two points raised in the response brief. Mr. Dulberg argues that disability should toll the statute of limitations and the statute of repose.

That is just -- being deemed disabled by the Social Security Administration is not legally disabled as noted by a significant amount of Illinois case law.

And I would just point out that if

Mr. Dulberg was disabled, he could not even bring the present suit because he is legally disabled.

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Mr. Dulberg also cites to Carlson, that is not applicable to this case. There is no question of fact that Mr. Dulberg's injury occurred in 2016, that he knew it, and he failed to file suit within two years.

Briefly on the statute of repose, the only act or omission alleged by -- against the Olsen Defendants occurred on October 31st, 2016, and the complaint filed more than six years later is not timely.

So unless your Honor has any questions, we will stand on our briefs and the arguments therein.

THE COURT: Do you want to address the Barton Doctrine at all or just rest on the briefs for it?

MR. JOCHUM: Your Honor, I could bring it up, but I think the statute of limitations and the statute of repose arguments are fairly dispositive.

Barton, there is no -- we have done extensive research on it. There actually is no Illinois case we have found deciding whether the Barton Doctrine applies or how an Illinois court

has applied it; however, the 3rd, 4th and 7th Circuits have held that the debtor must have permission for the bankruptcy court to bring suit against a trustee.

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I know Mr. Talarico has cited to an 11th Circuit case that holds otherwise. We would state that the Court should follow the holdings of the 3rd, 4th and 7th Circuit which are more dispositive on the issue, especially the 7th Circuit as that is based here in Chicago.

THE COURT: Fair enough. Thank you, Mr. Jochum.

Mr. Talarico?

MR. TALARICO: Thank you, Judge. As to the Barton Doctrine, the purpose of the Barton Doctrine as we have cited is to recognize the superiority of the bankruptcy court in other related matters, but once the bankruptcy court has finished its business, it no longer has jurisdiction.

The Barton Doctrine cannot -- a person cannot go ask a court that is not in existence for permission. That's as simple as I can make it.

The jurisdiction is no longer there. So the request to the bankruptcy court, which no

longer has jurisdiction, is a nonentity, something that can't be done or shouldn't be done.

THE COURT: Bankruptcy cases are re-opened all the time.

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MR. TALARICO: But this one -- they may be, Judge, but this one was not re-opened. Are you saying -- well, whatever. Okay. Yes, sir.

THE COURT: Okay. Did you have anything else you wanted to add, Mr. Talarico?

MR. TALARICO: Oh, the statute of limitations argument. The statute of limitations when linked with fraud by deception, including attorneys who are doing fraud by deception, there is a five-year statute from discovery.

The discovery was made on October 22nd, 2022 when ADR submitted to me by my request a contract different than what was presented to the bankruptcy court. The allegations are fraud and fraud by deception.

THE COURT: The allegations against Olsen, Willette and Yalden have what to do with the purported contract switch --

MR. TALARICO: That has to do with the fact -- what I am arguing about with Olsen is that

they claim that they had nothing -- the individual Defendants, Yalden and Willette, had nothing to do with the case, the bankruptcy case, yet the trustee applied and asked for and was paid money for their services. I don't see how they can be paid for something they didn't do.

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THE COURT: My question must have been unclear. What of your allegations of wrongdoing against Olsen, Willette and/or Yalden have anything to do with the purportedly improper change in terms of the ADR contract?

MR. TALARICO: The fact that they, Olsen related to the bankruptcy judge that Mr. Dulberg did not want to go forward with the case, the trial, to a jury trial, and that he was -- he acknowledged himself to be a poor witness such that ADR was his choice to go forward.

The trustee also in the hearing when he brought this motion said he didn't want to micromanage. And the last fact is this was a positive bankruptcy, a rarity, where, yes, the estate -- the trustee had control of the estate and the estate's action, but by relinguishing it and by the fact that Dulberg also was a taker from that

estate, he had -- and they said they are relying on what he wants to make a decision.

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They say he wants to go to ADR. He wants -- they are abandoning to a certain degree the control of that case. And that's based on a lie that was presented to the judge that this was the individual, Dulberg's, desire. So I think that's fraud.

THE COURT: First, it's not fraud against
Mr. Dulberg. At most, if true, it would be fraud
on the bankruptcy court.

Leaving that aside, all of that occurred in October of 2016. So even if I agreed with you that in theory that this complaint sounds in fraud, you still blew the five-year statute of limitations because 2016 is more than five years before you filed the suit.

MR. TALARICO: Not five years from when he knew about it, knew about the fraud.

THE COURT: He knew about everything that you just said when it happened because it happened in open court.

The production of a different ADR contract didn't suddenly reveal to him everything

that you just said was the wrongdoing that you are claiming the Olsen Defendants committed.

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That's why I tried to ask you very specifically and clearly and more than once what, if anything, does the changed -- purportedly changed, purportedly improperly changed ADR contract have to do with anything that any of these Defendants are alleged to have done.

You didn't answer that, but you told me everything that you claim they did wrong and all of that happened in 2016.

And I don't see what possible relevance the purported 2022 production of the changed terms, quote/unquote, ADR contract had to do with any of it.

MR. TALARICO: Your Honor, I have nothing further to say.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Talarico.

MR. TALARICO: You're welcome.

THE COURT: Mr. Jochum, you have the last word, if you wish.

MR. JOCHUM: I would just like to point out Adverston versus Riseburrow, all claims against an attorney are subject to 735 ILCS 5/13-214.3.

Mr. Talarico's assertion of fraud and how the statute of limitations applies is incorrect. And I have nothing further, your Honor.

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THE COURT: All right. Thank you both.

This motion is granted with prejudice. First, I agree with Mr. Jochum that the relevant statute of limitations is that for attorney's conduct, the two year statute of limitations, six year statute of repose.

By those measures, by both of those measures, the complaint is untimely as to these Defendants and is subject to dismissal.

The Plaintiffs have argued fraudulent concealment, but I see nothing having been fraudulently concealed as far as the wrongdoing that these Defendants are alleged to have committed. I see no basis for tolling the statute of limitations.

And as to the argument in the alternative set out in the brief that the Plaintiff, Mr. Dulberg, individually is under a legal disability that would toll the statute of limitations, again, I agree with the movants, the Defendants, that that is incorrect.

The brief itself notes that Section

1.06 of the statute on statutes defines a person
under legal disability is a person who -- well, I
don't need to read the whole thing, but essentially
it refers to individuals who because of mental
deterioration or physical incapacity, mental
illness, are unable or at least not fully able to
manage their person or estates.

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There is no suggestion whatsoever in the complaint or any of the exhibits to it or the exhibits to the response that that applies to Mr. Dulberg.

As Mr. Jochum pointed out, if it did apply to him, given the representation that he remains disabled, there would be another reason to dismiss the case because he would be incapable, legally incapable of moving forward at the present time.

So, again, I don't see any basis for tolling the statute of limitations based on that argument.

As to -- and as I discussed with Mr. Talarico, even if the five year statute of limitations were to apply, for purposes of

argument, which, again, I do not believe it does, still the actions took place and the Defendant -pardon me, the Plaintiffs were aware of the harm more than five years before the complaint was filed and it would still be subject to dismissal on limitations grounds.

In addition, as an alternate basis for dismissal, the Barton Doctrine as applied by the 7th Circuit, among others, I believe is appropriately invoked here.

Although, it may very well be true, and it is true apparently, that the bankruptcy case has been closed, it's routinely and possible to re-open the bankruptcy case. That happens for a host of reasons and the Plaintiff has presented no argument or suggestion why if he wished to pursue a cause of action against the movants, he could have sought to reopen and sought leave for the bankruptcy court to do so.

I think ordinarily the court then appoints an official, whether it be a trustee in this case or a receiver, ordinarily claims against those individuals appointed by the court need to be approved at a minimum by the court that appointed

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the individuals. And the Barton Doctrine is the bankruptcy specific manifestation of that generally accepted principle.

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So this motion is granted with prejudice. And I will provide 304(A) language in the order. I do find that there is no just cause for delay, enforcement or appeal of this order.

And so 304(A) language should be included in the written order memorializing today's proceedings.

All right. So then let's move, please, to the other Defendants for the moment. I know that I do need to give a deadline for the Plaintiff to replead against ADR Systems, if the Plaintiffs choose to do so, but I do want to first ask Miss Tinajero, I believe that you filed a motion to dismiss on behalf of Allstate. Am I correct about that?

MS. TINAJERO: So, Judge, we -- let me double check really quick. We answered the complaint. We have not filed a motion to dismiss. We may file a dispositive motion in the future, but no. We have nothing on file as of today.

THE COURT: Okay. And as we noted earlier, there is not anyone here on behalf of Defendants

- 1 | Kelly Baudin, William Randal Baudin II or Kelran,
- 2 | Incorporated, which surprises me, but is anyone
- 3 here able to represent whether those individuals
- 4 | had filed a responsive pleading on the schedule set
- 5 by this Court's order of March 28th?
- 6 MR. TALARICO: They have filed a motion to
- 7 dismiss based on 2-619(1).
- 8 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. Have we
- 9 already set a briefing schedule on that? I don't
- 10 | believe so.
- MR. TALARICO: Yes, we have, Judge.
- 12 THE COURT: Okay. On the Baudin motion to
- 13 dismiss?
- MR. TALARICO: Yes.
- 15 THE COURT: Okay. Well, then that briefing
- 16 | schedule will stand. I think it probably makes
- 17 | sense, and I imagine this might be a little bit
- 18 | frustrating for Mr. Chapman on behalf of ADR, but I
- 19 think it probably makes sense for me to hear that
- 20 | final motion to dismiss before setting a deadline
- 21 | for the Plaintiffs to file an amended complaint, if
- 22 they elect to do so, against ADR so Mr. Talarico
- 23 knows exactly what he has to replead and doesn't
- 24 | have to replead more than once.

MR. CHAPMAN: Your Honor, if you don't mind me interrupting only because I am looking at the May 18th order. And the Baudin Defendants' motion is set for July 31, 2023. Do you want to just have a status on that, on that date on the ADR, the complaint as it is to ADR?

THE COURT: The July 31 date, can you tell me the time? I don't have that order in front of me.

MR. CHAPMAN: Sure. 9:45 a.m.

THE COURT: So that's for status on disposition?

MR. TALARICO: Yes, your Honor.

MR. CHAPMAN: Yes.

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THE COURT: Yes, that will be for status, but Mr. Talarico, just to be abundantly clear, I am not requiring you to replead against ADR before that July date. I think it's fairest to hear that last motion to dismiss, as well, and then we can get one amended complaint depending on the ruling on that motion.

MR. CHAPMAN: I will just indicate that the matter -- I am just looking at a draft order I have been working one. I will say the matter as to ADR is continued for status to July 31 at 9:45 a.m.

1 THE COURT: Yes.

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2 MR. CHAPMAN: Okay. Thank you.

THE COURT: All right. Are there any other outstanding matters that it would be helpful for us to address this morning? Mr. Talarico, I will ask you first?

MR. TALARICO: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: Anybody else?

MR. CHAPMAN: Your Honor, on housekeeping, is it -- I would suggest that we have two separate orders because of the 304(A) language.

THE COURT: Agree.

MR. CHAPMAN: So I will submit an order to the court for ADR.

THE COURT: I think having two separate orders makes abundant sense with 304(A) language on one and not the other.

And they don't really need to say much more since we do have a court reporter transcribing the proceedings than that the motions are granted respectively without and with prejudice for the reasons stated on the record.

Thank you all and I will see you July 2.4 26th.

		Page 29
1		MR. JOCHUM: Thank you, your Honor.
2		MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you.
3		MR. TALARICO: Thank you, Judge, and counsel.
4		MS. TINAJERO: Thank you.
5		THE COURT: Have a good day, everyone. Thank
6	you.	
7		(WHICH WERE ALL THE PROCEEDINGS HAD
8		IN THE ABOVE-ENTITLED CAUSE ON
9		THIS DATE.)
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I, LINDA S. IDRIZI, a Certified Shorthand
Reporter of the State of Illinois, CSR No. 84-3704,
do hereby certify that I reported in shorthand the
proceedings had in the aforesaid matter, and that
the foregoing is a true, complete and correct
transcript of the proceedings had as appears from
my stenographic notes so taken and transcribed
under my personal direction.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereunto set my hand this 31st day of May, 2023.

Juda Sldvízi

LINDA S. IDRIZI, CSR

CSR No. 84-3704.

[& - al] Page 1

&	261,000 15:9	8	28:5
& 2:10	26th 28:24	84-3704 1:24	addressed 9:14
0	28th 26:5	30:5,17	addresses
	3	8th 9:24 10:2,6	10:10
010905 1:8	3,000 9:20 10:3	11:6 12:6,12	administration
1	300 2:11	14:22	15:21
1 26:7	304 13:19 25:5	9	adr 4:21 5:15
1.06 23:2	25:8 28:11,16	-	6:13,19,22 8:1
10 6:20	31 27:4,7,24	9:45 27:9,24	8:10,17,20 9:1
10905 4:2	31st 14:20	a	10:19 12:11,13
10:30 1:17	16:10 30:13	a.m. 1:17 27:9	13:5 18:16
117,000 7:13	3300 3:11	27:24	19:11,17 20:3
11th 17:6	3850 3:4	abandoning	20:23 21:6,14
12th 14:23 15:5	3rd 17:1,8	20:4	25:13 26:18,22
150 3:11	4	able 23:7 26:3	27:5,6,16,23
1746 30:15	4th 17:1,8	above 29:8	28:14
18th 27:3		abundant	adr's 5:18
190 3:4	5	28:16	10:18 advance 9:20
2	5/13-214.3.	abundantly	12:18
2 9:19 10:3	21:24	27:15	adverston
2-619 26:7	550 2:11	accepted 25:3	21:23
2016 9:13	560,000 7:7	accordance	aforesaid 30:7
14:18,20,22,23	57 15:7	7:18	agree 22:6,23
15:5 16:6,10	6	acknowledged	28:12
20:13,16 21:11	600 2:4	19:16	agreed 5:14
2022 1:8 4:2	60062 2:5	act 16:9	20:13
18:16 21:13	60601 3:12	action 19:23 24:17	agreement 6:21
2023 1:16 27:4	60603 3:5	actions 24:2	7:4,9,16,18,19
30:13	60661 2:12	actually 16:22	8:2,3 14:20
21 14:3	7	adams 2:11	agreements 8:7
21st 9:13,19	707 2:4	add 18:9	ahead 5:12 6:7
10:4,8 12:4,9	735 21:24	addition 24:7	14:10
22nd 18:16	7th 17:1,8,9	address 14:15	al 1:9
25th 1:16	24:9	15:16 16:16	
		15.10 10.10	

allegation 7:23	appeared 2:8	assume 6:13	24:7
allegations 8:3	2:15 3:8,15	assumed 6:16	baudin 1:9 4:2
13:4,16 18:18	appears 30:9	attached 8:8	5:9 6:23 15:6
18:20 19:8	applicable 16:4	attorney 21:24	26:1,1,12 27:3
alleged 16:9	applied 17:1	attorney's 22:7	behalf 2:8,15
21:8 22:16	19:4 24:8	attorneys 6:23	3:8,15 4:21,23
allegedly 15:4	applies 16:24	15:7 18:12	5:7 25:16,24
alleging 8:9	22:2 23:11	august 14:18	26:18
allow 13:17	apply 23:14,24	authority 5:23	believe 4:6 7:12
allstate 5:7	appointed	avenue 3:11	9:21 24:1,9
7:12 25:16	14:17 24:23,24	award 7:7	25:15 26:10
alluded 14:1	appoints 24:21	14:22 15:4	binding 6:18
alphabetical	appropriately	aware 24:3	6:21 7:6
5:16	24:10	b	bisgaard 2:10
alphonse 2:3,6	approval 8:20	bankruptcy	bit 26:17
4:13	14:19	6:15,18 7:3,10	blew 20:15
alternate 24:7	approved 6:18	7:19 9:9,18	boulevard 2:4
alternative	7:3 8:17 12:11	10:17 11:17,21	bound 9:1 13:6
22:20	12:13 24:24	11:23 14:17,18	breach 8:3,9
amended 26:21	arbitration	14:20 17:3,17	11:5 13:4
27:19	6:14	17:18,24 18:3	breached 8:1
amount 15:22	argued 22:13	18:18 19:3,13	8:10 9:2
amundsen 3:10	argues 15:18	19:21 20:11	bridge 5:12
answer 21:9	arguing 18:24	24:12,14,19	brief 6:1,9
answered	argument	25:2	13:14,14 14:13
25:19	18:11 22:19	barred 15:1	15:17 22:20
anybody 6:1	23:21 24:1,16	barton 16:16	23:1
28:8	arguments	16:21,24 17:15	briefed 4:4,19
apparently	14:14 16:15,20	17:15,20 24:8	briefing 4:7
24:12	arose 15:14	25:1	26:9,15
appeal 25:7	aside 20:12	based 17:10	briefly 15:16
appear 5:10	asked 19:4	20:5 23:20	16:8
13:10	asserting 13:24	26:7	briefs 5:20
appearances	assertion 22:1	basis 9:12	12:24 16:14,17
2:1 3:1		22:17 23:19	,

[bring - court] Page 3

bring 16:1,18	27:1,9,13,21	complaint 6:21	cook 1:1
17:3	28:2,9,13 29:2	7:24 8:8 13:5	correct 4:16,17
brisbois 2:10	chapmanspin	13:11 15:8	8:23 11:19,20
brought 19:19	3:7	16:11 20:14	11:23,24 25:17
business 6:14	check 25:19	22:11 23:10	30:8
7:16 17:19	chicago 2:12	24:4 25:19	correctly 9:1
	3:5,12 17:10	26:21 27:6,19	counsel 4:11,13
C	choice 19:17	complete 13:8	29:3
c 4:23	choose 25:14	30:8	county 1:1,2
call 5:19	circuit 1:1 17:6	concealed	couple 4:4
carlson 16:3	17:8,10 24:9	22:15	course 6:4
case 15:23 16:4	circuits 17:2	concealment	court 1:1,14
16:23 17:6	circumstances	22:14	4:1,15,18 5:4,8
19:3,3,14 20:5	7:22	concern 10:10	5:11 6:3,18 7:3
23:16 24:12,14	cited 5:22 17:5	conduct 22:8	7:10,10,20 8:4
24:22	17:16	considered	8:21,24 9:18
cases 18:3	cites 16:3	5:22	10:9,22 11:2,9
cause 24:17	claim 6:17 8:1	consistent 7:17	11:12,15,18,21
25:6 29:8	13:17 15:1,14	contact 2:7	11:21,23 12:1
caused 15:4	19:1 21:10	continued	12:16,20 13:1
certain 20:4	claiming 21:2	27:24	13:21 14:5,21
certified 30:4	claims 13:20	contract 8:10	16:16,24 17:3
certify 30:6	21:23 24:22	8:14,19,21 9:2	17:7,11,17,18
chance 6:4 14:9	clause 12:3	9:3,4,15,16,22	17:21,24 18:3
change 8:18	clear 9:7 27:15	10:1,6,13,14,17	18:8,18,20
19:10	clearly 21:4	10:18,21,23	19:7 20:9,11
changed 8:16	closed 24:13	11:1,3,7,17,18	20:20,22 21:18
10:21 21:5,6,6 21:14	coerced 15:13	11:22 12:4,5	21:20 22:4
	collectively 5:2	12:12,17,19	24:19,20,23,24
changes 8:16	come 5:12	13:5,7,9 18:17	25:23 26:8,12
	commencing	18:22 19:11	26:15 27:7,10
chapman 3:3,6 4:20,21 6:5,8	1:17	20:24 21:7,14	27:14 28:1,3,8
8:4 12:21,23	committed 21:2	contracts 12:10	28:12,14,15,19
13:2,12 14:4	22:17	control 6:16	29:5
14:13 26:18		19:22 20:5	
14.13 20.10			

[court's - fact] Page 4

	defines 23:2	dispositive	entitled 10:19
craig 4:24		-	
	degree 20:4	16:20 17:9	29:8
cross 5:11	delay 25:7	25:21	especially 6:2
csr 1:24 30:5	department 1:2	disputing 7:1	17:9
30:16,17	depending	distributed	essentially
d	27:19	7:13	15:10 23:4
date 27:5,7,17	desire 20:7	division 1:2	estate 19:22,22
29:9	deterioration	doctrine 16:17	20:1
dates 9:12	23:6	16:24 17:15,15	estate's 19:23
davis 3:10	differed 11:18	17:20 24:8	estates 23:8
	different 4:4	25:1	et 1:9
day 10:2 29:5 30:13	8:7,19 10:14	document 7:2	etchingham 7:6
	11:3 18:17	doing 18:13	7:17
days 14:3	20:23	dollars 12:18	everybody 4:1
deadline 25:12	directed 7:20	double 25:18	4:9
26:20	direction 30:11	draft 27:22	evidence 8:19
debtor 17:2	disability 15:18	dulberg 1:4,5	evident 10:10
december 9:23	22:22 23:3	4:2,14,15 6:15	exactly 9:5
10:1,6 11:6	disabled 15:20	7:14 15:3,17	26:23
12:6,12 14:22	15:22 16:1,2	16:1,3 19:13	execute 9:4
14:23 15:5	23:15	19:24 20:10	executed 6:22
deception	discovery 9:22	22:21 23:12	8:22
18:12,13,19	18:14,15	dulberg's 7:1,7	exhibit 6:20
deciding 16:23	discussed 23:22	14:17 16:5	11:4
decision 20:2	dismiss 4:5	20:7	exhibits 5:21
deemed 15:20	5:13,18,20		8:7 23:10,11
defendant 24:2	14:2,7,24	e	existence 17:21
defendants	23:16 25:16,20	e 3:13	extensive 16:22
1:10 2:15 3:8	26:7,13,20	earlier 25:23	f
3:15 4:24 5:2,9	27:18	elect 26:22	_
5:19,19 14:6	dismissal 13:15	emailed 15:6	f 1:19
14:16 15:7	22:12 24:5,8	enforcement	fact 6:9 12:9
16:10 19:2	disposition	25:7	15:3,6 16:5
21.2,8 22.12	27:11	enter 7:20	18:24 19:12,20
22:16,24 25:11	41.11	entered 7:7	19:24
25:24 27:3		14:23 15:5	

facts 13:24 fraud 18:12,13 grounds 13:24 failed 16:6 18:18,19 20:8 24:6 guys 15:8 fair 13:22 20:9,10,15,19 guys 15:8 fairly 16:20 fraudulent h h 4:23 hand 30:13 favor 7:8 front 8:13 27:8 happen 12 fees 10:20 frustrating 26:18 happens 2 file 15:14 16:6 25:20,22 26:21 fully 4:4,19 harm 24:3 filed 4:8 10:7 23:7 further 21:17 happens 2 filed 4:8 10:7 further 21:17 happens 2	housekeeping 28:9 idrizi 1:24 30:4 30:16 ii 26:1 ilcs 21:24 illinois 1:1 2:5 24:14 21:11 2:5 2:12 3:5,12 30:5 illness 23:7
fair 13:22 20:9,10,15,19 guys 15:8 17:11 22:1 h fairest 27:17 fraudulent h h fairly 16:20 22:13 hand 30:13 favor 7:8 fraudulently 22:15 happen 12 feel 5:24 15:8 front 8:13 27:8 20:21,21 <	28:9 idrizi 1:24 30:4 3 30:16 2:6 ii 26:1 ilcs 21:24 21:11 illinois 1:1 2:5 24:14 2:12 3:5,12 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
17:11 22:1 h fairest 27:17 fraudulent h 4:23 fairly 16:20 22:13 hand 30:13 far 5:4 22:15 fraudulently 22:15 feel 5:24 15:8 front 8:13 27:8 happen 12 fees 10:20 frustrating 26:18 file 15:14 16:6 25:20,22 26:21 fully 4:4,19 filed 4:8 10:7 23:7 16:11 20:17 further 21:17	idrizi 1:24 30:4 3
fairest 27:17 fraudulent h 4:23 fairly 16:20 fraudulently h 4:23 far 5:4 22:15 fraudulently h 4:23 favor 7:8 fraudulently h 4:23 hand 30:13 happen 12 happened 20:21,21 happened 20:21,21 happens 2 file 15:14 16:6 16:14 20:17 fully 4:4,19 harm 24:3 filed 4:8 10:7 10:17 further 21:17	idrizi 1:24 30:4 3
fairly 16:20 far 5:4 22:15 favor 7:8 feel 5:24 15:8 fees 10:20 file 15:14 16:6 25:20,22 26:21 fully filed 4:23 hand 30:13 happen 12 happened 20:21,21 2 happens 2 harm 24:3 hear 26:19 27:17	3 30:16 ii 26:1 ilcs 21:24 21:11 illinois 1:1 2:5 24:14 2:12 3:5,12 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
fairly 16:20 far 5:4 22:15 favor 7:8 feel 5:24 15:8 front 8:13 27:8 fees 10:20 frustrating happened file 15:14 16:6 25:20,22 26:21 fully 4:4,19 filed 4:8 10:7 23:7 further 21:17	3 30:16 ii 26:1 ilcs 21:24 21:11 illinois 1:1 2:5 24:14 2:12 3:5,12 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
far 5:4 22:15 fraudulently happen 12 favor 7:8 feel 5:24 15:8 front 8:13 27:8 happen 12 fees 10:20 frustrating happens 2 file 15:14 16:6 25:20,22 26:21 fully 4:4,19 happens 2 filed 4:8 10:7 further 21:17	2:6 ii 26:1 ilcs 21:24 illinois 1:1 2:5 2:12 3:5,12 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
favor 7:8 22:15 feel 5:24 15:8 front 8:13 27:8 happened fees 10:20 frustrating happens 2 file 15:14 16:6 25:20,22 26:21 fully 4:4,19 happens 2 filed 4:8 10:7 23:7 further 21:17	ilcs 21:24 illinois 1:1 2:5 24:14 2:12 3:5,12 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
feel 5:24 15:8 front 8:13 27:8 fees 10:20 frustrating happens 2 file 15:14 16:6 26:18 fully 4:4,19 hear 24:3 filed 4:8 10:7 23:7 further 21:17	21:11 illinois 1:1 2:5 24:14 2:12 3:5,12 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
fees 10:20 frustrating file 15:14 16:6 26:18 25:20,22 26:21 fully 4:4,19 filed 4:8 10:7 23:7 further 21:17	24:14 2:12 3:5,12 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
file 15:14 16:6 25:20,22 26:21 filed 4:8 10:7 16:11 20:17 fully 4:4,19 23:7 further 21:17 harm 24:3 hear 26:19 27:17	3 15:23 16:23,24 30:5 illness 23:7
25:20,22 26:21 fully 4:4,19 hear 26:19 16:11 20:17 further 21:17	30:5 illness 23:7
filed 4:8 10:7 23:7 27:17	illness 23:7
16:11 20:17 further 21:17	
heard 6:4	14.7 IIIIayiiic 15.10
24:4 25:15,20 22:3 hearing 1:	
26:4,6 future 25:21 litering 1. 4:3 5:14 1	
final 26.20	• •
find 25.6	1 1 0
fine 5:15 13:1 generally 25:2 held 17:2	21:6
finished 17:18 give 6:4 13:22 helpful 28	_
first 6:6 8:21 14:1,3,9 25:12 hereunto 3	,
10:6,22 14:10 given 23:14 high 7:4,9	
20.0 22.6 glad 14:15 mgmlgnt 6	
go 4:8 5:12 0:0 noid 10:12	
five 18:13 13:1/14:10 noldings 1	17:7 including 7:13
20:15 16 18 1/:21 19:14,1/ noids 1/:6	
23.23.24.4	· '
follow 17:7 going 5:1,15,18 4:22 6:8,1	
following 6:22 0:12 14:2 7:22 12:23	
foregoing 30:8 8000 4:1,12,13 15:12 14:2	,
forgive 0.7	· /
forward 13:17 13:8 29:3 21:10 22:3	
10.14 17 23.17 gotten 8:15 27:1,12 28	·
found 16:23 granted 15:5 29:1	individually
13:11 22:5 honorable	1:19 1:4 22:21
25:4 28:20	

Veritext Legal Solutions

• 1• • 1	• 1 07 47 17	1 • 0.10	44 17 17
individuals	july 27:4,7,17	lewis 2:10	matters 17:17
23:5 24:23	27:24 28:23	lewisbrisbois	28:4
25:1 26:3	jurisdiction	2:14	means 9:21
initial 13:13	17:19,23 18:1	lie 20:6	measures 22:10
injury 6:16	jury 19:15	light 6:9	22:11
15:3,12 16:5	k	limitations	mediation 6:14
interesting	kelly 1:9 26:1	15:1,19 16:19	6:18,21 7:3,5,6
9:11	kelran 26:1	18:10,11 20:16	7:13,15,16,17
interrupting	knew 15:3,12	22:2,7,8,18,23	7:19 14:19,21
27:2	15:12 16:6	23:20,24 24:6	15:13
introduces 4:9		linda 1:24 30:4	memorializing
invoked 24:10	20:19,19,20 know 6:13 0:15	30:16	25:9
issue 17:9	know 6:13 9:15	linked 18:11	mental 23:5,6
j	10:15,24 11:1	little 26:17	michael 1:19
	12:6 17:5	llp 2:10 3:3	4:3
j 4:23	25:12	longer 17:19,23	michelle 3:13
jason 2:13 4:23	knows 26:23	18:1	5:6
jason.jochum	l	looking 27:2,22	michigan 3:11
2:14	1 1:8 4:2	low 7:4,9	micromanage
jochum 2:13	language 13:19	,	19:20
4:22,23 14:7	25:5,8 28:11	m	mind 27:1
14:12 16:18	28:16	m 4:23	minimum
17:12 21:20,22	lasalle 3:4	made 7:11 8:15	24:24
22:6 23:13	law 1:2 2:3	8:15 9:11,20	minute 11:15
29:1	15:23	18:15	
joseph 4:24	lawofficeofal	make 11:16	moment 25:11
judge 4:2 5:6	2:7	17:22 20:2	money 10:19
7:5,16 8:6 9:6	leave 14:1	makes 9:10	19:4
9:9 10:5,18,24	24:18	26:16,19 28:16	months 12:18
11:7,14 12:7		making 11:13	morning 4:1,12
17:14 18:6	leaving 20:12	manage 23:8	4:13,20,22 5:4
19:13 20:6	legal 22:22	manifestation	5:6 28:5
	23:3		motion 5:18,20
25:18 26:11		25:2	
	legally 15:22	25:2 march 26:5	5:21 6:6,12,17
29:3		march 26:5	13:3,11 14:7
	legally 15:22		

Veritext Legal Solutions 888-391-3376

			1
22:5 25:4,16	0	ordinarily	person 17:20
25:20,21 26:6	o 4:23	24:20,22	23:2,3,8
26:12,20 27:3	occurred 7:5	otto 1:19 4:3	personal 6:16
27:18,20	14:22 16:5,10	outset 5:17	30:11
motions 4:4,7	20:13	outstanding	perspective
4:19 5:3,13	october 14:20	28:4	6:11
14:8 28:20	16:10 18:15	oversaw 7:6	physical 23:6
movants 4:19	20:13	own 8:11	place 12:5 24:2
22:23 24:17	offices 2:3	p	plain 11:16
move 14:6	official 24:21	paid 19:4,5	plainly 14:16
25:10	oh 18:10	paragraph	plaintiff 2:8
moving 23:17	okay 4:18 5:8	15:7	4:14 22:21
mtinajero 3:14	9:18 12:1,20	paraphrasing	24:15 25:13
n	18:7,8 21:18	15:10	plaintiff's 4:11
n 1:9	25:23 26:8,12	pardon 24:3	plaintiffs 1:7
name 4:13	26:15 28:2	participating	13:22 22:13
necessary 7:21	olsen 4:24 5:2	15:13	24:3 25:14
need 4:6 5:24	5:19,19 14:6	parties 5:14,22	26:21
23:4 24:23	14:16,21 16:10	5:23 7:18 8:17	pleading 26:4
25:12 28:18	18:20,24 19:9	9:4	pleadings 7:24
neither 7:2	19:12 21:2	party 8:10	please 4:10 6:6
never 10:23	omission 16:9	paul 1:4,5 4:14	14:10 25:11
nonentity 18:1	once 17:18 21:4	pay 10:3	pled 10:15 13:5
north 3:11	26:24	payment 7:11	point 9:16
northbrook 2:5	open 20:22	10:7 12:3,18	11:12 15:24
noted 14:24	24:14	payments 9:11	21:22
15:7,22 25:23	opened 18:3,6	9:19	pointed 23:13
notes 23:1	opportunity	pending 13:20	points 15:17
30:10	13:23	people 15:9	poor 19:16
notice 7:11	order 5:16 25:6	performed 7:18	positive 19:21
notion 13:6	25:7,9 26:5	11:19	possible 21:12
november 9:13	27:3,8,22	performing 9:3	24:13
9:19 10:4,7	28:13	permission	possibly 12:15
12:4,9	orders 28:11,16	17:3,22	prejudice
,	,	,	13:15,18 14:3

[prejudice - see] Page 8

22:5 25:5	quibble 11:10	rely 12:24	rest 16:17
28:21	quick 8:6 25:19	relying 20:1	retired 7:6
present 16:2	quote 21:14	remains 23:15	reveal 20:24
23:17	\mathbf{r}	remember 10:3	reviewed 5:21
presented 6:17	r 1:4,5	reopen 24:18	6:10
9:8,17,23 10:1	raised 15:17	replead 13:23	revocable 1:6
10:17 11:4,6	randal 26:1	14:2,3 25:13	4:15
11:17,22 14:21	raphael 4:24	26:23,24 27:16	right 5:11
18:17 20:6	rarity 19:21	reply 5:21	10:13 14:5
24:15	rchapman 3:7	13:14 14:8	22:4 25:10
previous 13:8	read 5:20 6:1	reported 1:24	28:3
principle 25:3	14:8 23:4	30:6	riseburrow
prior 9:22	ready 6:7 14:11	reporter 6:3	21:23
probably 26:16	really 25:19	28:19 30:5	robert 3:6 4:21
26:19	28:18	repose 15:2,19	routinely 24:13
proceedings	reason 23:15	16:8,20 22:9	rule 13:19
25:9 28:20		represent 4:14	ruled 7:17
29:7 30:7,9	reasons 24:15 28:22	26:3	ruling 27:19
proceeds 7:12	receiver 24:22	representation	S
production		23:14	s 1:24 30:4,16
20:23 21:13	recognize 17:16	request 17:24	saw 7:21
provide 25:5	record 4:10	18:16	
purported	7:10 28:22	require 8:14	saying 10:13
18:22 21:13		required 9:18	says 9:11 12:9
purportedly	refer 5:1	requiring 10:7	
19:10 21:5,6	referred 5:3 refers 23:5	12:3,17 27:16	schedule 4:7
purpose 17:15	relets 23:3	requisite 13:19	26:4,9,16 scheduled 9:12
purposes 23:24		research 16:22	
pursue 24:16	19:13	respectively	second 10:21
put 14:16	relevance	28:21	section 23:1
q	21:13	response 5:21	security 15:21 see 13:3 14:7
_	relevant 22:6	8:6 14:8 15:17	
question 10:11	relied 5:23	23:11	19:5 21:12
15:2 16:5 19:7	relinguishing	responsive 26:4	22:14,17 23:19
questions 12:24	19:23	_	28:23
14:15 16:14			

[seeking - think] Page 9

		1	
seeking 10:12	sounds 20:14	subject 21:24	8:5,6,21,23 9:5
sense 26:17,19	south 3:4	22:12 24:5	10:16,24 11:6
28:16	specific 25:2	submit 28:13	11:9,11,14,15
sentence 12:7	specifically	submitted 11:1	11:20,24 12:2
separate 28:10	8:13 21:4	18:16	12:17 17:5,13
28:15	speculation	suddenly 20:24	17:14 18:5,9
services 19:5	13:8,10	sufficient 13:4	18:10,23 19:12
set 4:6 22:20	spingola 3:3	suggest 28:10	20:18 21:16,18
26:4,9 27:4	stand 16:14	suggestion 23:9	21:19 23:23
30:12	26:16	24:16	26:6,11,14,22
setting 26:20	starting 4:10	suit 15:14 16:2	27:12,15 28:5
shorthand 30:4	5:15	16:7 17:3	28:7 29:3
30:6	state 7:24 17:7	20:17	talarico's 22:1
sides 6:4 14:9	30:5	suite 2:4,11 3:4	talking 8:12
signature 7:1	stated 13:13	3:11	tell 27:7
30:15	15:11 28:22	sum 7:15	term 9:9,10
signed 9:16,22	states 6:20	superiority	10:3,7 13:4
10:14,23 11:7	stationary	17:16	terms 8:11,12
12:2,5,13,19	10:18	support 8:1	8:18 9:2,10,17
13:9	status 27:5,10	11:4	10:19 12:8
significant	27:14,24	sure 10:9 11:2	19:10 21:14
15:22	statute 15:1,2	11:14 27:9	thank 6:8 8:4
similar 14:12	15:18,19 16:8	surprises 26:2	12:20 13:1,12
simple 17:22	16:19,20 18:10	suspect 10:10	14:4,5,12
sir 18:7	18:11,14 20:15	switch 18:22	17:11,14 21:18
six 16:11 22:8	22:2,7,8,9,17	systems 4:21	22:4 26:8 28:2
skeptical 13:21	22:22 23:2,20	6:13,19,22	28:23 29:1,2,3
skokie 2:4	23:23	25:13	29:4,5
smith 2:10	statutes 23:2	t	theories 13:24
smithamunds	stenographic	take 7:10	theory 9:1 11:4
3:14	30:10	taken 30:10	20:14
social 15:21	straightforward	taker 19:24	thing 23:4
sought 24:18	6:12 8:2	talarico 2:3,6	things 10:20
24:18	street 2:11 3:4	4:12,14,17	think 7:23 9:13
		5:10 6:20,24	13:13,22 16:19
		3.10 0.20,24	

[think - years] Page 10

20.7.24.20	4 • 0.6	• 1 • 0	C 11
20:7 24:20	trying 9:6	videoconfere	wrongfully
26:16,19 27:17	10:16	1:14	15:4
28:15	two 8:7,7 15:15	vs 1:8	\mathbf{y}
third 8:10	15:16 16:7	W	yalden 4:24
time 5:9 14:2	22:8 28:10,15	w 2:13	18:21 19:2,9
18:4 23:18	type 8:1	wait 11:15	year 12:4 18:13
27:8	u	want 6:2 11:9	20:15 22:8,9
timely 16:12	u 4:23	14:9 15:16	23:23
tinajero 3:13	ultimately 9:3	16:16 19:14,19	years 15:15
5:5,6,7 25:15	11:19	25:14 27:4	16:7,11 20:16
25:18 29:4	unable 23:7	wanted 18:9	20:18 24:4
today 4:3 5:13	unclear 6:24	wants 20:2,3,4	20.10 21.1
14:1 25:22	19:8	way 5:10 11:3	
today's 25:9	under 7:22 9:4	weeks 12:18	
told 21:9	9:21 22:21	welcome 21:19	
toll 15:18 22:22	23:3 30:11	west 2:11	
tolling 22:17	understand	whatsoever	
23:20	10:22 11:12	23:9	
took 12:5 24:2	12:14	whereof 30:12	
transcribed	understanding	willette 5:1	
30:10	8:24	18:21 19:2,9	
transcribing	unexecuted 9:2	william 26:1	
28:19	9:3	wish 12:22	
transcript 30:9		21:21	
trial 19:15,15	unquote 21:14	wished 24:16	
tried 21:3	unsigned 9:8 10:13 11:5,23		
true 20:10	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	witness 19:16	
24:11,12 30:8	13:7	30:12	
trust 1:6 4:16	untenable 13:7	word 6:6 12:21	
trustee 6:16	untimely 22:11	14:10 21:21	
7:20 14:17	V	working 27:23	
17:4 19:3,18	version 11:5,21	written 25:9	
19:22 24:21	11:22 13:9	wrong 21:10	
try 9:6 11:16	versus 4:2	wrongdoing	
<i>J</i>	21:23	19:8 21:1	
		22:15	