

From: Laurenzi, Larry (USATNW)

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2010 2:23 PM

To: andrecwharton@thewhartonlawfirm.com; horne@hgwlaw.com; aquinn@evanspetree.com; chastainlaw@mac.com; barry.mcwhirter@gmail.com; weinmanb@bellsouth.net; mambodove@aol.com; kgreen88@bellsouth.net; anne@scholl-law-firm.com; harviel@bellsouth.net; danieljohnson25@bellsouth.net; elaurenzi@gmlblaw.com; hdooffice2601@yahoo.com; howard@manisandsalomon.com; jerwincrimlaw@hotmail.com; jethomas@justice.com; keith@sparkman-zummach.com; js_Ganguli@hotmail.com; kjaylaw@yahoo.com; durandk@thomasonlaw.com; lwkern@yahoo.com; leegeraldlaw@gmail.com; lgarner@217dclaw.com; marty@iwilldefendu.com; cmr@michaelrobbinslaw.com; michael@scholl-law-firm.com; mstengel@mjspc.com; wells@hgwlaw.com; rparris38103@yahoo.com; rcib@express56.com; Rasampson@hotmail.com; criminaldefender@hotmail.com; sperkinslaw@yahoo.com; sowilkes@bellsouth.net; steffenlaw@aol.com; lefflerlawoffice@comcast.net; TRYLK9@yahoo.com

Cc: Stephen_Shankman@fd.org

Subject: Response to Steve Shankman's e-mail dated December 30, 2009

January 8, 2010

Dear Counsel:

It has come to my attention that you may have received a communication on December 30, 2009, via electronic mail from Stephen B. Shankman, Federal Public Defender in this district. The communication was addressed to several attorneys who practice criminal law in United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee.

The allegations made by Mr. Shankman in this communication regarding Assistant U. S. Attorney Kevin Ritz are baseless. As to the specific incident described in his e-mail, Mr. Shankman apparently received information about Mr. Ritz and in a communication to the "Criminal Justice Panel" accused Mr. Ritz of failing to acknowledge agreements reached with defense counsel and/or making misrepresentations. Mr. Ritz neither concealed any agreements reached with defense counsel nor did he make any misrepresentations. The record in the case referred to in the communication from Mr. Shankman establishes that no concealment or misrepresentations were made by Mr. Ritz to opposing counsel, and that there was no other agreement between the parties other than that made known to the court by the parties.

Before sending this communication, Mr. Shankman did not contact me, Mr. Ritz, or anyone else in this office to discuss the issues therein. We would all agree that our professional reputation within our legal community is important. I hope that before any of us disseminate disparaging information concerning a fellow lawyer that we act responsibly by taking it upon ourselves to perform some "due diligence" to determine whether or not the information is accurate. At a minimum this "due diligence" should include contacting someone within the respective office to gauge the accuracy of the allegation. In this case, our office was never contacted by Mr. Shankman. Had Mr. Shankman discussed this issue with our office, he would have quickly learned that his published accusations are meritless.

I assure you that we take any complaint about conduct of attorneys in this office seriously. I encourage you to contact us concerning any allegation of misconduct by any of our staff. Our door is always open. As always, if you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

s/Lawrence J.

LAWRENCE J.

UNITED STATES

Laurenzi

LAURENZI

ATTORNEY