

DISTRICT COURT, COUNTY OF LARIMER, STATE OF COLORADO Court Address: 201 La Porte Avenue, Suite 100 Fort Collins, CO 80521 (970) 494-3500	<p style="text-align: center;">▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲</p>
Plaintiff: Linda Janda, v. Defendant: Michael A. Zulian, D.D.S.	
<i>Attorneys for Plaintiff:</i> Thomas J. Tomazin, Esq., #5941 Tomazin Hillyard & Clor, LLP 4643 S. Ulster Street, Suite 1200 Denver, CO 80237 Phone: (303) 771-1900 Fax: (303) 793-0923 Email: tom@thedenverinjurylawfirm.com	Case No: 2019CV31065 Division: 4B Courtroom:
PLAINTIFF'S MOTION NO. 3 – MOTION AND MEMORANDUM OF LAW REQUESTING EXTENDED TIME TO CONDUCT VOIR DIRE AND REQUEST FOR MINI-OPENING (UNOPPOSED)	

LINDA JANDA ("Plaintiff"), by and through counsel, Tomazin Hillyard & Clor, LLP and respectfully submits this Motion and Memorandum of Law, pursuant to C.R.C.P. 47, requesting 68 minutes per side to conduct Voir Dire, an additional 5 minutes per side for any juror who is struck for cause, and a 2-4 minute mini-opening.

CONFERRAL: Plaintiff has conferred with counsel for Defendant who joins in the request.

I. “An Empirical Examination of Civil Voir Dire: Implications for Meeting Constitutional Guarantees and Suggested Best Practices” University of Denver Sturm College of Law, 2020

Attached as Exhibit 1 and incorporated by this reference is the 86 page 2020 University of Denver Sturm College of Law legal research paper titled “An Empirical Examination of Civil Voir Dire: Implications for Meeting Constitutional Guarantees and Suggested Best Practices”, by John Campbell, JD, Jessica Salerno, PhD, Hannah Phalen, MS, JD, Samantha Bean, Valerie Hans, PhD, Less Ross, PhD, and Daphna Spivack, JD.

The authors begin:

But if a fair jury is the real goal, how do we ensure we have one? Which jurors should be seated, and which excluded? And how do we achieve the goal of finding the biases that could pervert the jury system? These questions point directly at jury selection. Yet despite the soaring language applied to the good of juries, we know little in the civil setting about how jury selection (voir dire) impacts the aspirations of our founders and the guarantees of our courts.

After describing various voir dire approaches employed by the courts, the authors state:

But which of the existing approaches recognizes the normative purpose of juries and complies with the positive law mirroring that purpose? Research can answer the various empirical questions that trickle down from this overarching issue. It is surprising, then that these questions are seldom explored in the civil setting, while the role of bias receives significant attention in the criminal literature. To begin to fill this void, we designed a study that contributes to our understanding of bias in civil juries, and the role

jury selection plays in guaranteeing, or potentially interfering with, “a fair trial.” We attempted to answer a variety of core questions, including:

1. Do minimal versions of voir dire that rely on jurors identifying their own biases pinpoint biases that predict jurors’ decisions?
2. How common are various predispositions (referred to as biases in this paper) that could be identified with more extended voir dire? Specifically, how common are general biases towards civil litigation? These could develop from concerns with the burden of proof (believing it is too high or too low), concerns about the nature of lawsuits, beliefs about noneconomic damages, views of lawyers, etc. We also wondered, how common are specific biases – biases related to specific issues in the case (views of doctors, insurance companies, social issues implicated in the dispute, etc.)?
3. If general and/or specific biases exist in jurors, do such biases impact how jurors decide cases?
4. Do those biases favor the plaintiff, favor the defendant, or cut both ways?
5. Can bias be cured by merely calling jurors’ awareness to their potential biases during voir dire before they evaluate a case?
6. Can a judge cure bias using rehabilitation?
7. Can jurors recognize when their bias influenced their decision?

To answer these questions, we gathered massive amounts of data, both nationally and in Colorado (the research was conducted under the auspices of the Denver Empirical Justice Institute at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law). The result was a sample of 2,041 jurors. We exposed each juror to one of three different cases. Each “case” was based on a real case so that there was significant, detailed evidence, real argument from both sides, and so that the case bore significant verisimilitude to situations that occur in court. We experimentally manipulated whether jurors underwent

voir dire, the extent of that voir dire, and whether jurors encountered rehabilitation from a judge. To our knowledge, the descriptive measures of the prevalence of partiality in the jury pool are the first of their kind. Further, the data reveal whether biases impact jury behavior, how significantly they impact it, whether rehabilitation can cure biases, and whether jurors can self diagnose, which can inform best practices for jury selection to ultimately impanel impartial jurors. The data raise serious concerns of the risks associated with seating juries that fail to meet constitutional, statutory, and precedential guarantees of impartiality when juries are formed without meaningful voir dire to eliminate biases.

In conclusion, the authors' wrote:

Here, based on the results, existing literature, and the variety of processes that exist in United States courts, we offer a set of conclusion and guidelines that, if implemented, would balance the very real time constraints of jury trials with the best practices necessary to guarantee a fair jury to both sides.

1. The generic minimal voir dire questions had very little utility. It was rare for jurors to answer the biases questions in the affirmative and the questions had almost no explanatory power in predicting their verdicts or their damage awards. As a group, these questions only explained 0.6% of variation in verdicts and only 2% of the variation in damage awards. As such, the limited voir dire used in many courts does almost nothing to predict jury behavior, nor does it provide information to the court or the parties about which jurors can/should remain.

2. The majority of the extended voir dire questions consistently predicted jurors' verdicts and damage awards in meaningful and consistent directions. As a group, these questions explained 20% of the variance in verdicts and 19% of the variance in damage awards. Attorneys and courts will do a much better job picking jurors based on these questions.

3. Relatedly, extended voir dire using open-ended questions that address the specific features of civil cases, like how they function, and address the specific issues in the case is necessary. Jurors do not reveal bias in response to questions that ask them if they "have any

biases.” Indeed, the questions used by many courts do nothing to predict bias and do nothing to cure it. Jurors can’t identify their own biases or predict how they would impact decision making. Instead, jurors will only reveal potential biases when asked questions that are more specific, and that then allow the juror to respond. It is also reasonable to expect that revealing bias requires some time and familiarity, and as such, requires enough time for jurors to feel comfortable.

4. Inferentially, voir dire requires time. Relatedly, time limits like those common in many Colorado courts and federal courts almost certainly guarantee that jurors with biases are seated on the jury. Each juror should be examined at some length, whether as part of a group or individually. The scope of possible biases is wide, jurors are resistant to revealing bias if it makes them sound like they could not be fair, and it will take time to explore the issues with jurors.

5. Questionnaires could expedite jury selection. One possible way to expedite review would be to allow detailed questionnaires, as jurors could answer the questions without having to speak in front of others, and providing questionnaires would be an efficient way to ask a number of questions of the entire panel, all at once.

6. Courts must allow for identification of both (a) general bias and (b) specific biases. Many general biases about civil lawsuits are relatively prevalent, including views on the propriety of lawsuits, damage caps, preferences for either side, concerns about the burden of proof, and the like. Specific biases also abound. These vary from case to case. Both general and specific biases will influence jury decision-making—and at least some of this influence is improper, as the data shows that some views will prevent jurors from following existing law.

7. Once a juror identifies a general or specific bias, they should be excluded. Rehabilitation does not work. If anything, the jurors who say they can set aside bias are more likely to be blind to the role that bias plays in their future fact-finding.

8. A practical implication of the data is that there should be more jurors struck for cause, and as a result, a larger panel may be needed at

times. More fundamentally, the view that jurors should be “saved” in some way, or that the fewest number of total jurors possible should be used to seat a jury is not necessary, nor wise. Because jurors are abundant, rather than attempting to keep jurors, courts should be willing to cull a significant number of jurors in order to obtain a final jury that consists of jurors without either strong general or specific biases.

9. On net, of the biases measured, more of them hurt plaintiffs. Yet, both sides face biases that, if allowed, could result in jury nullification. It is essential and possible to seat a jury free of these intense biases.

10. Juries are often criticized as too prone to produce results inconsistent with the evidence. Similarly, the Constitution, case law, and statutes typically guarantee a fair trial by a fair jury. Existing practices that prohibit or drastically limit voir dire and that support and allow jury rehabilitation encourage jury nullification because of bias and also threaten the right of both sides to a fair trial.

11. With a random draw, given the prevalence of some biases, it is possible to seat a jury in which the majority of jurors hold biases that will make processing the evidence difficult. And given that biases seem to skew against plaintiffs, these biases could all favor the defense in some cases. Deliberation is unlikely to cure this.

All parties and the Court desire a fair jury trial. The empirical evidence in this 86-page research paper demonstrates how crucial it is to allow lawyers to conduct voir dire. Skilled voir dire is conducted as a conversation. Voir dire takes time because as potential jurors reveal biases, it is necessary to conduct voir dire on additional members of the venire panel.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF VOIR DIRE.

In Colorado the courts have allowed and protected the right of the parties to intelligently exercise challenges for cause and peremptory challenges in the questioning of jurors. As long ago as 1896, in *Jones v. People*, 47 P. 275 (Colo. 1896), the Colorado Supreme Court stated as follows: “Such questions were proper not alone for the purposes of informing the parties to the end **that they might intelligently exercise their right to challenge for cause**, but for the stronger reason that **counsel were entitled to be fully informed of the state of mind of the jurors with reference to the matter**, in order that the parties would be fully advised in exercising **the right of peremptory challenges.**” (Emphasis added).

Further, in *Grand Lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen v. Taylor*, 44 Colo. 373, 99P.580 (1909) the Court stated where a juror “said that he might unconsciously favor” one party, “the trial court erred in denying the defendant’s challenge for cause.” *Blades v. DaFoe*, 704 P.2d 317 (Colo. 1985).

The Colorado Supreme Court further noted in *Blades*, that “[w]here there is a sufficient reason to believe at the beginning of the trial the prospective juror is not indifferent, but . . . may be unconsciously influenced by considerations in addition to the evidence presented at trial and instructions of law, the juror must be dismissed for cause.” *Blades*, 704 P.2d at 324.

Until recently, the Colorado Supreme Court's jurisprudence protected parties from error during jury selection by imposition of an automatic reversal rule. The automatic reversal rule required appellate courts to automatically reverse verdicts in cases where there was error in denying a party's challenge to a potential juror's service for cause. *Laura A. Newman, LLC v. Roberts*, 2016 CO 9, ¶ 13, 365 P.3d 972, 975. This new analytical framework for evaluating reversible error in jury selection requires the appellant to engage in a "case specific, outcome-determinative analysis." *Laura A. Newman, LLC v. Roberts*, 2016 CO 9, ¶ 24, 365 P.3d 972, 978 (citing *People v. Novotny*, 2014 CO 18, ¶ 17, 320 P.3d 1194, 1200). This new framework limits the manner in which a litigant can establish that he or she has been denied the right to a fair and impartial jury (especially given the impact of CRE 606(b)). By removing the presumption of prejudice from jury selection errors, (*Novotny* and *Laura A. Newman, LLC*), and prohibiting inquiry into whether a juror was actually biased against a party (CRE 606(b)) the Colorado Supreme Court has created a situation where the importance of voir dire is significantly heightened. Under the Supreme Court's new analytical framework, to prevail on a claim of error in jury selection, a party must demonstrate that there is a reasonable probability that the error contributed to the jury's verdict. See, *People v. Roman*, 2017 CO 70, ¶ 13, 398 P.3d 134, 138. In order to develop a sufficiently detailed record on appeal to preserve the right to a fair trial, it is imperative that

parties have adequate time to address prospective jurors and probe their biases. This process, even if done expeditiously, especially with COVID-19, will take substantially more than 20 minutes per side.

Parties are entitled to “considerable latitude” during good faith examination of prospective jurors to enable the parties properly to exercise both peremptory challenges and challenges for cause. *Oglesby v. Conger*, 507 P.2d 883, 885 (Colo. App. 1972) (cert. denied)

The opportunity to adequately examine prospective jurors is mandatory. Furthermore, it is a critically important part of the trial process to ensure the selection of a fair, unbiased and impartial jury as possible, especially given the unique facts of this case. Although this Court may limit the examination, the limitation must be reasonable and the limitation must further the purpose of minimize delay in the trial.

However, a trial court’s discretion to limit the examination of prospective jurors is not absolute. See *Oglesby v. Conger*, 507 P.2d 883, 885 (Colo. App. 1972) (cert. denied); cf. *Whitlock v. Salmon*, 752 P.2d 210 (Nev. 1988). Rule 47(a)(3) states in pertinent part:

The parties or their counsel *shall* be permitted to ask the prospective jurors additional questions. . . . *In order to minimize delay*, the judge may reasonably limit the time available to the parties or their counsel for juror examination.

(Emphasis added.) Parties are entitled to “considerable latitude” during good faith examination of prospective jurors to enable the parties properly to exercise both peremptory challenges and challenges for cause. *Oglesby*, 507 at 885. A trial court may not limit voir dire to the point of preventing the parties from intelligently exercising challenges. See *People v. Greenwell*, 830 P.2d 1116 (Colo. App. 1992).

Pursuant to Rule 1, the Colorado Rules of Civil Procedure “shall be liberally construed, administered, and employed by the court and the parties to secure the just, speedy, and inexpensive determination of every action.” C.R.C.P. 1(a).

To enhance the goal of the just determination of every action, Colorado law requires that “[a]n orientation and examination shall be conducted ... to obtain information about prospective jurors to facilitate an intelligent exercise of challenges for cause and peremptory challenges.” C.R.C.P. 47(a). “The purpose of voir dire examination is to enable counsel to determine whether any prospective juror possesses beliefs which would cause bias so as to prevent a fair and impartial trial.” C.R.C.P. 47(a). “Challenges for cause may be taken [by counsel] on one or more of the following grounds: ... (6) [h]aving formed or expressed an unqualified opinion or belief as to the merits of the action; (7) [t]he existence of a state of mind in the juror evincing enmity against or bias to either party.” C.R.C.P. 47(e). “Such challenges shall be tried by the court, and the juror challenged, and any other

person, may be examined as a witness.” C.R.C.P. 47(f). A decision to grant or deny a challenge for cause based on bias is a factual determination as to whether there is sufficient reason to question a prospective juror’s ability to act as an impartial fact finder. *Pyles-Knutzen v. Bd. Of County Cmmr*, 781 P.2d 164 (Colo. App. 1989).

Sufficient doubt of a juror’s ability to act as an impartial fact-finder include statements by a juror that he (1) is prejudiced against people who bring lawsuits; (2) would be reluctant to award damages unless a plaintiff was completely incapacitated; (3) has a natural bias against a party; (4) has uncertainty whether s/he could be fair or impartial; (5) has “feelings” against a party and is uncertain they can be disregarded; (6) has doubts about ability or willingness to apply the law. See, e.g., *Pyles-Knutzen*, 781 P.2d 164, 166 (trial court should grant cause challenge if “there is sufficient reason to question [the] prospective juror’s ability to act as an impartial fact finder.”); *Blades v. DaFoe*, 704 P.2d 317, 3223 (Colo. 1985) (“a juror who harbors enmity against or bias in favor of either party may be challenged for cause.”); *Morgan v. People*, 624 P.2d 1331 (Colo. 1981). “After each challenge for cause sustained, another jury shall be called to fill the vacancy and may be challenged for cause.” C.R.C.P. 47(g).

While courts may limit the time available to the parties for juror examination based on the needs of the case, “[a]ny party may request additional time for juror

examination in the Trial Management Order, at the commencement of the trial, or during juror examination based on developments during such examination. Any such request shall include the reasons for needing additional juror examination time.” C.R.C.P. 47(a)(3). Furthermore, “[d]enial of a request for additional time shall be based on a specific finding of good cause reflecting the nature of the particular case and other factors that the judge determines are relevant to the particular case and are appropriate to properly effectuate the purposes of juror examination set forth in section (a) of this Rule.” *Id.* Specifically, the court may “limit or terminate repetitious, irrelevant, unreasonably lengthy, abusive, or otherwise improper examination.” *Id.*

In this case, Plaintiff is long-time resident of Larimer County. She is currently residing in Michigan to take care of an ailing mother. Defendant is a well-respected oral surgeon who has been in practice in the Loveland area for over 30 years. A significant amount of Plaintiff’s treatment was in the Loveland/Fort Collins area with multiple dental/medical practitioners and a surgical procedure at UC Health Poudre Valley Hospital. There will be multiple healthcare professionals who will be testifying in which the prospective jurors would be questioned about their knowledge or treatment by these practitioners. The trial is scheduled for five days commencing on May 17, 2021. There are still many issues in the community regarding COVID-19. This case involves many substantive and unique factual and

damages issues which Plaintiff and Defendant believe cannot adequately be explored in a perfunctory voir dire which is 20 minutes per side.

Jurors will be compelled to consider and appraise the value of the harms Plaintiff has suffered. However, it is anticipated that many potential jurors may possess both conscious and unconscious biases that make them hostile to such claims. While some jurors may be forthcoming with their conscious biases, uncovering the unconscious biases of other potential jurors will be difficult and will require counsel to probe jurors individually to ensure a fair and unbiased jury is empaneled. Uncovering such biases of the potential jurors cannot be done in a 20-minute voir dire; yet, failure to empanel an unbiased jury may result in an unjust verdict to one or both parties.

Accordingly, Plaintiff and Defendant respectfully moves this Court to extend voir dire to 68 minutes for Plaintiff to conduct voir dire and 68 minutes for Defendant to conduct voir dire. Even with this expansion of time for voir dire, counsels' examinations of the potential jurors will be limited to no more than 4 minutes for each of the 17 prospective jurors that are positioned "in the box" during jury selection that are a conversation, not a list of questions. Therefore, Plaintiff and Defendant further requests that each side be permitted an additional five minutes for each juror struck for cause, if any.

Finally, Comment to Rule 47 states, “[t]he amendments to this rule add language to require orientation of the prospective jurors. This case-specific orientation would be in addition to any general orientation the prospective jurors may have received.” Furthermore, “if both counsel desire to make brief, non-argumentative statements to the prospective jurors on what the case is about, the court should have discretion to permit such statements.” C.R.C.P. 47 cmt. Thus, to better orient the potential jurors to the nature of the case and to promote fairness and understanding by the prospective jurors, **Plaintiff and Defendant respectfully moves this Court for permission—pursuant to C.R.C.P. 47—to give a brief (two to four minute) “mini opening” statement prior to voir dire to “give the prospective jurors ‘a little more flavor of the case and what [the parties]’ respective theory of the case is.”** *Bach v. Warden, Mule Creek State Prison*, 2017 WL 6947740 (C.D. Cal., S.D., Aug. 7, 2017).

III. A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL JURY IS FUNDAMENTAL TO JURY TRIALS

The fundamental necessity of a fair and impartial jury appeared in early decisions that initiated an effort to secure and safeguard the integrity of the juries at trial. The United States Supreme Court has said that “...the trial court has a serious duty to determine the question of actual bias.” *Dennis v. United States*, 339 U.S. 162, 168, 70 S.Ct. 519, 521, 94 L.Ed.2d 734 (1950). All persons otherwise qualified for jury service “are subject to examination as to actual bias.”

United States v. Wood, 299 U.S. 123, 133, 57 S.Ct. 177, 179, 81 L.Ed.2d 78 (1936). Jury service by a person with actual bias in a particular case “would violate the right to an impartial jury.” *United States v. Dillinger*, 472 F.2d 340, 367 (7th Cir. 1972), *cert. denied*, 93 S.Ct. 1443 (1973). The “touchstone of a fair trial is an impartial trier of fact- ‘a jury capable and willing to decide the case solely on the evidence before it.’” *McDonough Power Equip., Inc. v. Greenwood*, 464 U.S. 548, 554, 104 S.Ct. 845, 849, 78 L.Ed.2d 663 (1984), *quoting Smith v. Phillips*, 455 U.S. 209, 217, 102 S.Ct. 940, 946, 71 L.Ed.2d 78 (1982)). The parties’ right to “an impartial jury guaranteed by the Sixth Amendment” can be impaired by a “failure to sufficiently probe the jury,” *Id.*, at 286, and can violate the “essential demands of fairness.” *Knox v. Collins*, 928 F.2d 657, 661 (5th Cir. 1991).

Thus, courts have consistently held that “the trial court, when endeavoring to preserve that right, should permit a reasonably extensive examination of prospective jurors so that the parties have a basis for an intelligent exercise of the right to challenge.” *Fietzer v. Ford Motor Company*, 622 F.2d 281, 284 (7th Cir. 1980). Accordingly, the trial court should permit a development of “the facts fully enough so that it can make an informed judgment on the question of ‘actual bias,’ ” *United States v. Nell*, 526 F.2d 1223, 1229 (5th Cir. 1976), and a court should be “zealous in its protection of probing voir dire.” *Cf. Id.*, *citing Beard v. Mitchell*, 604 F.2d 485, 501 (7th Cir. 1979).

Such a voir dire should be permitted to enable counsel to “exercise intelligently their peremptory challenges.” *Dillinger, supra*, 472 at 368.

DECADES OF RESEARCH OF JURY BIASES

The *belief* that a fair jury trial can be conducted with a 20 minute per side voir dire defies all research that has been conducted for decades, culminating in the 2020 study cited above and attached as Exhibit 1. Plaintiff respectfully states that the *belief* is wrong and there should be no haste in righting this wrong. Plaintiff bears the burden of proof.

For decades social science research shows worrisome predispositions in the American public. Interviews with civil jurors confirmed a lot of suspicion toward plaintiffs, even when they provided an award. A public opinion survey of 600 people was conducted nationwide in the fall of 1999. About a quarter of the sample believed that insurance companies were more likely to deny a valid claim, while over half thought that an individual was more likely to bring a fraudulent claim. Also, 92% of the respondents agreed, and 76% strongly agreed, with the statement “There are far too many frivolous lawsuits today.”

As far back as 1979, evidence of an insurance industry multi-million dollar, nationwide media campaign to influence jury awards was recognized, along with

evidence of its effectiveness. One of the primary messages was that high verdicts were driving up the insurance premiums.

The forces in our society that seek low negligence verdicts obtained their best publicity for free, when an elderly grandmother in New Mexico spilled a cup of hot coffee in her lap in February 1992. Extremely few Americans know the true facts surrounding Stella Liebach's case against McDonalds, including that she was willing to settle for \$20,000, that the jurors, when first hearing of the case, thought it was frivolous and crazy, that she suffered burns requiring skin grafting, or that the judge reduced the \$2.7 million punitive damages verdict to \$480,000. Regardless of the true facts, rare is the voir dire that doesn't have jurors citing the McDonalds case as an example of a frivolous or excessive verdict. No comparable, nationally known case is ever cited by jurors where the plaintiff was the victim of a crazy verdict.

Even with the current political climate that unduly restricts the resources of our judicial branch, a judge's arbitrary restriction of voir dire time is unjustified. Where counsel are fully allowed their duty of full exploration for biases, voir dire will still be completed in the first day of trial in the vast majority of cases and in many cases with opening statements in the first day. It cannot and should not seriously be argued that the length of civil voir dire is an undue imposition on our court system. There simply are not enough civil jury trials that actually take place

to warrant the claim. Exhaustive jury studies have made it clear that it is no longer disputable that the typical time-limited voir dire is simply inadequate to disclose this underlying bias. For the individual parties in this case and in the vast majority of cases, the opportunity to be heard by a fair and impartial jury is a once in a lifetime event.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests 68 minutes of voir dire for Plaintiff, 68 minutes of voir dire for the Defendant with an additional 5 minutes for each party for each juror struck for cause, and a 2-4 minute mini-opening to briefly outline the facts of the case to put context into the voir dire questioning.

Dated this 12th day of April 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

TOMAZIN HILLYARD & CLOR, LLP

This document was filed via CCE e-file system. The originally signed copy is on file at the offices of Tomazin Hillyard & Clor, LLP

/s/Thomas J. Tomazin
Thomas J. Tomazin, Esq. #5941

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing **PLAINTIFF'S MOTION NO. 3 – PLAINTIFF'S MOTION AND MEMORANDUM OF LAW REQUESTING EXTENDED TIME TO CONDUCT VOIR DIRE AND REQUEST FOR MINI-OPENING (UNOPPOSED)** was served via CCE on this 12th day of April 2021 addressed as follows:

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In accordance with C.R.C.P. 121 §1-26(9), a printed copy of this document with original signature(s) is maintained by Tomazin Hillyard & Clor, LLP, and will be made available for inspection by other parties or the Court upon request.