



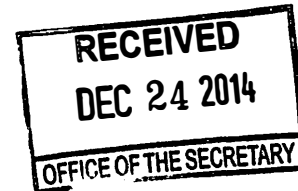
UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
NEW YORK REGIONAL OFFICE  
BROOKFIELD PLACE, 200 VESEY STREET, STE 400  
NEW YORK, NY 10281-1022

MICHAEL D. BIRNBAUM  
TELEPHONE: (212) 336-0523

December 23, 2014

**BY EMAIL/UPS**

The Honorable Jason S. Patil  
Administrative Law Judge  
U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
100 F Street, NE  
Mail Stop 1090  
Washington, DC 20549



**Re: Matter of Scott M. Stephan, File No. 3-16312, and Matter of Reliance  
Financial Advisors, LLC, et al., File No. 3-16311**

Dear Judge Patil:

On behalf of the Division of Enforcement, I write to request that the hearings scheduled in the above-titled matters, currently scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on January 7 and 8, 2015, respectively, (i) be converted to one combined pre-hearing telephonic scheduling conference to be held at 9:30 a.m. on January 8, and (ii) that any hearing conducted in either matter take place in New York City.

We have consulted with counsel for Respondents Stephan and Dembski, both of whom join in this request. We have contacted Respondent Grenda on several occasions both by telephone and email to solicit his input concerning our recommendation—both as a Respondent himself and as an owner, managing member and officer of Reliance Financial Advisors, LLC (“Reliance”), but we have not received any substantive response.<sup>1</sup>

We anticipate asking the Court to consolidate the two matters that are the subject of this letter entirely so that they may be considered in one hearing in order to conserve the court’s and parties’ resources. The matters relate to the same underlying facts and would require duplicative testimony from numerous witnesses. Respondent Stephan, through counsel, has indicated that he would join the Division in such a request, and Respondent Dembski’s counsel informed the staff that he would agree to consolidate the cases for pre-hearing purposes but has not yet determined whether he would join in a request to combine hearings.

The Division, joined by Respondents Stephan and Dembski, request that any hearing be held in New York City in light of its proximity to most witnesses and their counsel. Respondents and

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Grenda did agree by email to discuss this matter with the Division staff at 2:00 p.m. on December 17, 2014, but he neither called the staff nor answered his cell phone at that time and has not responded to any calls, voicemails or emails since then.

nearly all likely witnesses live—or, in the case of Reliance, have a principal place of business—in New York State, mostly in or around Buffalo, New York, and counsel for both the Division and Mr. Dembski work in New York City. None of the Respondents, their counsel, or any likely witness resides in Washington, D.C., and the Division does not expect to call any witnesses from the Washington, D.C. area.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael D. Birnbaum

cc: All Respondents (by email and UPS)



**Frouge, Tony**

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**From:** Birnbaum, Michael D.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 23, 2014 12:28 PM  
**To:** ALJ  
**Cc:** Frouge, Tony; Paul Batista [REDACTED]; andrew@paceandpace.com; Personal [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Matters 3-16311 and 3-16312  
**Attachments:** 2014.12.23 Letter to Judge Patil re Pre-Hearing Telephonic Conference.pdf

Judge Patil,  
Please find attached a courtesy copy of a letter addressed the Court. The original and three copies will follow by UPS.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Birnbaum  
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