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SECURITIES EXCHANGE COMMISSION	
Denial of FINRA Forum for Expungement Arbitration: Applicant: Kevin Clayton Cox v. Respondent: Financial Industry Regulatory Authority	FILE NO. <u>3-18980</u>
APPLICATION FOR REVIEW	

On December 21, 2018, Kevin Clayton Cox (“Mr. Cox”), who resides at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Osprey, Florida [REDACTED], submitted a Statement of Claim to the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (“FINRA”) Office of Dispute Resolution requesting a hearing for the expungement of his CRD record as it relates to one customer dispute disclosure, occurrence number 1870548 (“the Occurrence”). On December 28, 2018, counsel for Mr. Cox received notice that the Director of FINRA Office of Dispute Resolution (“the Director”) denied FINRA forum for arbitration for expungement of the Occurrence. This notice stated the Occurrence arises from a “prior adverse Award” and is not eligible for arbitration, citing Industry Code Rule 13203(a). However, Industry Code Rule 13203(a) does not state that occurrences arising from prior adverse Awards are ineligible for FINRA arbitration. Rather, it states:

- (a) The Director may decline to permit the use of the FINRA arbitration forum if the Director determines that, given the purposes of FINRA and the intent of the Code, the subject matter of the dispute is inappropriate, or that accepting the matter would pose a risk to the health or safety of arbitrators, staff, or parties or their representatives. Only the Director may exercise the authority under this Rule.

Industry Code Rule 13203(a) is excessively vague, and allows for an egregious amount of discretion on the part of the Director. It offers no true guidance on what is not eligible for FINRA

forum and allows for many inconsistencies. In fact, counsel for Mr. Cox has represented other Associated Persons in FINRA arbitration for expungement of disclosures arising from prior adverse Awards and has succeeded on the merits in at least one case. FINRA filed a Partial Opposition to the Motion to Confirm Arbitration Award in that case. However, the case resulted in an Order for Confirmation of Arbitration Award, which was ordered on May 15, 2018. It is also important to note that in addition to no codified rule barring the arbitration for expungement of disclosures arising from a prior adverse Award, FINRA's Dispute Resolution Expungement Training and Exam packet states that arbitrators "should not" grant expungement for these types of occurrences. It does not state that they cannot grant expungement for these types of occurrences and it stands to reason that there would be no need for guidance on whether they should or should not be expunged from a CRD record if FINRA intended for these types of occurrences to be ineligible for FINRA forum altogether. Based on Mr. Cox' obligations to abide by FINRA Rules, he is bound to FINRA arbitration for disputes between himself and a Member Firm. The Director has abused their discretion by denying forum in such an inconsistent and arbitrary manner.

Additionally, Mr. Cox was not a named party in the underlying arbitration that led to the Award Judgment; only Morgan Stanley was found liable. Since Mr. Cox was not named in the arbitration, Mr. Cox never had a hearing on the merits, and he never had a chance to defend himself against the underlying customers.

Mr. Cox submits this Application for Review to the Commission requesting that he be permitted to bring his case in the forum that he is both entitled to and bound to by the FINRA Industry Code Rules. Whether the Occurrence is eligible for expungement should be subsequently determined by the Panel that is assigned in arbitration, in accordance with FINRA Industry Code Rules 2080 and 13805.

Dated: January 25, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harris Freedman", is written over a horizontal line.

Harris Freedman, Esq.

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Misty Brown, certify that on this 25th day of January 2019, I caused the original and three copies of this Application for Review of Kevin Clayton Cox, to be served via Certified Mail on:

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