

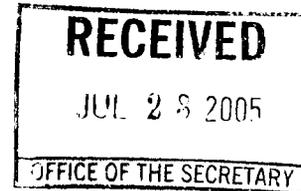
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DIVISION OF MARKET REGULATION

March 23, 2005



Kathleen Maguire
Division of Market Regulation
Security & Exchange Commission
450 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20549

Dear Ms. Maguire:

Over many years I have watched the securities industry attempts to deal with consumer related disputes. The rhetoric about the NASD's ability to "police" itself, its alternative dispute resolution process, and promised protection of the consumer is replete with assurances and vapor. The NASD might have taken the lead in dealing with one of the largest scandals in recent history (e.g. MCI and Smith Barney). However, even in the face of confirmed reports, convictions, and sanctions, the industry failed the consumer and Smith Barney failed their clients. So who is there to protect the consumer if the industry and the broker working in silence and denial support each other?

Since experiencing the Smith Barney and MCI debacle, I have written the NASD and asked for justice. Their response was to deny any industry bias; an act of bias in and of itself. So, I have a dispute within the NASD dispute resolution that appears to have no chance for resolution within their proclaimed fair dispute resolution system. I have been extremely concerned with their inconsistent practices and results that investors with similar complaints within their system experience. It is my understanding that arbitrators may remain silent about their awards, a disparate and contradictory policy and practice.

In my professional experience handling labor grievances in other industries, the arbitrator is compelled to provide his/her reasoning in decisions either for or against the grievant. A published, well reasoned decision makes sense. It allows the process to be detailed in the open without any allegations of hidden agendas, unfairness, or industry bias.

I am aware of a new proposed rule that would require arbitrators to explain their awards when requested to do so by the claimant. This is a critical step in moving forward and leveling the playing field with the NASD. I strongly encourage the SEC to approve the new rule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Orlando E. Blake". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a faint, illegible background.

Orlando E. Blake, PhD, CPT