

1 **IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA**

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6 ALFRED P. CENTOFANTI III,

7 Petitioner,

8 vs.

9 EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF  
10 THE STATE OF NEVADA, IN AND FOR  
11 THE COUNTY OF CLARK, AND THE  
HONORABLE LEE A GATES,  
DISTRICT JUDGE,

12 Respondents,

13 And

14 THE STATE OF NEVADA,

15 Real Party in Interest.

Case No. 52994

**FILED**

MAY 18 2009

TRACIE K. LINDEMAN  
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT  
BY *[Signature]*  
DEPUTY CLERK

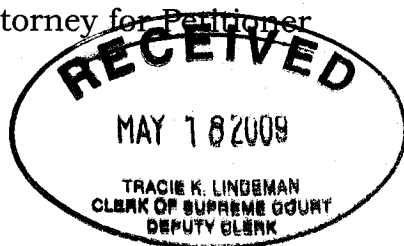
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Case No. 52994

**VS.**

Real Party in Interest.

COMES NOW, Petitioner, Alfred P. Centofanti, III, by and through his counsel of record, Carmine J. Colucci, Esq. of the law firm of Carmine J. Colucci, Chtd., and submits his Supplemental Points and Authorities in Support of the Petitioner's Writ of Mandamus.

/ / / / /

1 herein.

2 DATED this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2009.

3 CARMINE J. COLUCCI CHTD.

4   
CARMINE J. COLUCCI, ESQ.

5 Nevada Bar No. 000881

6 629 South Sixth Street

7 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

8 Attorney for Petitioner

9 **MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

10 **I.**

11 **INTRODUCTION**

12 Respondents, through the Clark County District Attorney's Office have filed  
13 an Answer to Petitioner's Writ of Mandamus. In response thereto and in light of  
14 additional research, Petitioner submits these supplemental points and authorities.

15 Petitioner has asserted that Respondent's Answer virtually concedes that  
16 disqualification is warranted, so the Clark County District Attorney's Office should  
17 be disqualified from the representation of the State in this and all future  
18 proceedings involving Petitioner including the defense related to the Petitioner's  
19 pending Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post-Conviction). In the alternative, if  
20 this Court has any doubts as to the factual basis for Petitioner's claims, the Court  
21 should remand this case to the District Court and grant leave for the Petitioner to  
22 propound discovery and then schedule an evidentiary hearing during which  
23 Petitioner can submit the necessary proof in the form of witnesses, documents and  
24 other evidence so the Court can grant him the relief he seeks.

25 Originally, Petitioner's petition in this matter was denied without an  
26 evidentiary hearing despite the representation of unproven facts by the State and  
27 a documented prima facie showing by Petitioner at the time of the original hearing.

28 // // // //

1                                   **SUPPLEMENTAL FACTS, ARGUMENT AND AUTHORITY**

2           1. Additional supplemental case law in support of Petition.

3           Petitioner has located additional case law which supports the relief he is  
4 requesting from this Court. Specifically, other states have examined this issue and  
5 have announced guidelines Petitioner is urging this Court to adopt and make the  
6 law in Nevada.

7           In People v. Chavez, 139 P.3d 649 (Col. 2006), the Colorado Supreme Court  
8 lists 12 steps which must be considered in evaluating if a proper screen is in place.  
9 Those 12 steps are as follows:

10          The policy provides:

- 11           1. This policy pertains to any employee of the Office of the District  
12 Attorney for the Tenth Judicial District Attorney who formerly  
13 represented clients in criminal cases now pending prosecution in this  
14 office. This member shall be referred to in this policy as 'employee.'  
It also applies to all staff of the Office of the District Attorney for the  
Tenth Judicial District insofar as they are involved in carrying out the  
provisions of this policy.
- 15           2. The employee shall be barred from any participation whatsoever  
16 in the prosecution of his/her former client's case(s).
- 17           3. The employee shall not access the file of the former client.
- 18           4. The employee shall not consult with the prosecutor for the Tenth  
Judicial District regarding the former client.
- 19           5. The employee shall not access any of the photographs,  
20 documents, recorded interviews, recorded surveillance activities,  
21 tangible evidence, criminal charges, criminal records, motions filed  
by either party, orders of the court, or any other matter related to any  
case involving his/her form client.
- 22           6. The employee shall not relate any confidential information  
23 revealed to the employee during his/her representation of the former  
client to any member of the Office of the District Attorney for the  
24 Tenth Judicial District.
- 25           7. The employee shall not be called upon to attend, nor represent the  
26 Office of the District Attorney for the Tenth Judicial District, any  
court dates, no matter how minor in nature, regarding his/her former  
client.
- 27           8. Whenever an attorney, who represents clients with pending  
28 criminal cases, or an employee of such an attorney is hired by the

1 Office of the District Attorney for the Tenth Judicial District, a list of  
2 the cases the employee has handled shall be posted by email to all  
3 members of the office, and posted at the mailbox area where it is  
4 openly visible for the inspection of all employees.

5 9. This policy has been distributed to all employees of the Office of  
6 the District Attorney for the Tenth Judicial District, and forms part  
7 of their expected duties as an employee thereof.

8 10. This policy will be provided to every former client of such an  
9 employee of the Office of the District Attorney for the Tenth Judicial  
10 District as said clients become known. It shall be the duty of every  
11 attorney in this office to provide any former client this policy.

12 11. This policy is available to any judicial officer and attorney  
13 handling cases of the employee's former clients.

14 12. Every member of the Office of the District Attorney for the tenth  
15 Judicial District shall act independently of the employee in judgment  
16 and discretion regarding the prosecution of former clients. If the  
17 employee is in a supervisory position within the Office of the District  
18 Attorney for the Tenth Judicial District, the subordinates of the  
19 employee shall look to the next highest member of the office for  
20 review of any issues that office policy otherwise requires regarding  
21 cases of his/her former client. IF the next highest member of the  
22 office is the District Attorney, he may designate either the Chief  
23 Deputy Attorney or another supervisor to perform such review.

24 Id. At 655.

25 See, also Hart v. State, 62 P.3d 566 (Wyoming 2003) discussing their  
26 6 steps.

27 See, also, In People v. Mazanares, 139 P.3d 655 (Colo. 2006) [Properly  
28 drafted screening policy in district attorney's office is relevant to disqualification  
determination; but despite screening policy, assertions of members of district  
attorney's office, *without more*, cannot justify the conclusion that no confidential  
information was shared.] (Emphasis added).

In the instant case, there was absolutely no corroboration for the bald  
assertions by the arguing deputy district attorney that any actual screening  
procedures were in place. Merely saying they are does not make it so especially  
when the deputy making the assertions does not have personal knowledge that  
the representations that he is making are true.

See also, U.S. v. Phillip Morris, 312 F. Supp. 2d. 27 (D.D.C. 2004)

1 [Requirement that notification is made under the Rules of Professional Conduct  
2 to all parties *before* appearing in the action]. (Emphasis added)

3 2. Disqualification is mandated under the doctrine of judicial estoppel.

4 The Clark County District Attorney's Office has misrepresented the facts  
5 regarding the disqualification to this Court. Specifically, this Court should be  
6 aware that in the State's Opposition to Petitioner's Petition for Writ of Habeas  
7 Corpus (Post-Conviction), Chief Deputy District Attorney James Sweetin wrote:

8 The Defendant's contention that he received ineffective assistance of  
9 counsel for 'failing to understand and apply Nevada law in the  
10 preparation and trial of this matter' is completely negated by the fact  
11 that he associated competent local counsel in this case. Gloria  
12 Navarro graduated from Arizona State University School of Law and  
13 was admitted to the Nevada Bar over a decade ago in 1994, and she  
14 was an experienced criminal defense attorney at the time of trial. She  
15 assisted in nearly all phases of the case and was there to advise  
16 counsel on the application of Nevada law. The Defendant's rights  
17 were not violated and he was entitled to and received competent  
18 Nevada counsel throughout the representation of his case.

19 Id. at p.22, ll. 16-24.

20 In the State's Answer to the Petition for Writ of Mandamus, Chief Deputy  
21 District Attorney Steven S. Owens wrote something quite different:

22 Gloria Navarro was only involved in the case because the Special  
23 Public Defender's Office was the locally associated counsel for trial  
24 attorney Allen Bloom.

25 Id. At p. 2, ll. 13-15.

26 He went on further to write:

27 The record shows that Navarro, although present, did not question  
28 any of the witnesses at trial or participate in arguing the case to the  
jury...

Id. at p. 4, ll. 12-15.

And concluded:

Locally associated counsel's role in Centofanti's representation was  
minimal and certainly not the same as that of trial counsel Allen  
Bloom.

Id. at p. 8, ll. 1-3.

1 So which one is it? Did she assist “in nearly all phases of the case and was  
2 there to advise counsel on the application of Nevada law” or was her “role in  
3 Centofanti’s representation...minimal?”

4 Further, there were times during the trial when Ms. Navarro was out of the  
5 court room and another attorney from the Special Public Defender’s Office was  
6 present, in her place, and who had virtually no knowledge of the facts of the case  
7 nor had she participated in the preparation for trial. However, that has little or  
8 no bearing on this proceeding due to the apparent conflict of interest which is  
9 created by Ms. Navarro’s position and lack of notice thereof as required by law.

10 The Ninth Circuit, in the recent decision of Sechrest v. Ignacio, 549 F.3d  
11 789 (2008), examined the practice of taking inconsistent positions by the State of  
12 Nevada in criminal proceedings. The Court held the “doctrine of judicial estoppel  
13 prevents the state. . . from gaining an advantage by asserting one position and  
14 then later seeking an advantage by taking a clearly inconsistent position. Id. At  
15 p. 9. This is exactly what the District Attorney’s Office has done in this matter by  
16 asserting inconsistent positions in the Opposition to the Writ of Habeas Corpus  
17 (Post-Conviction) filed in the District Court and in the Answer to the Writ of  
18 Mandamus filed with the Nevada Supreme Court.

19 Therefore, this Court should grant Petitioner’s Writ of Mandamus, and the  
20 District Attorney’s Office should be disqualified.

21 3. The District Attorney’s Office has admitted the merits of the Petition.

22 The next issue which must be addressed with regard to both the Opposition  
23 and the Answer filed by the District Attorney’s Office, is that neither Chief Deputy  
24 District Attorney Sweetin, nor Chief Deputy District Attorney Owens consulted  
25 with Ms. Navarro, then how is it they were able to take the positions they asserted  
26 and to make the purported factual assertions made in each of their respective  
27 filed pleadings? Again, you cannot have it both ways. If they consulted with her,  
28

1 the unidentified “screening” procedures were and are not in place or were and are  
2 not adequate. If the State did not consult with her then the factual assertions  
3 made to the Court are mere speculation and do not support the arguments for  
4 which they are purported to be applicable. The State did not explain to the  
5 District Court what “screening” procedures were supposedly in place. In either  
6 scenario, they have admitted the merits of Petitioner’s arguments, and the Writ  
7 of Mandamus should be granted and the District Attorney’s Office disqualified.

8 4. The District Attorney’s waiver argument is not valid as it would violate  
9 the Rules of Professional Conduct.

10 In the Answer to the Petition for Writ of Mandamus, the District Attorney’s  
11 Office takes a position that can best be characterized as the “so what if we did”  
12 defense to the failure of both they and Ms. Navarro to follow the rules.  
13 Specifically, Chief Deputy District Attorney Owens cites to NRS 34.735(6), entitled,  
14 “Petition: Form” and the following:

15 (6) You must allege specific facts supporting the claims in the  
16 petition you file seeking relief from any conviction or sentence.  
17 Failure to allege specific facts rather than just conclusions may cause  
18 your petition to be dismissed. If your petition contains a claim of  
19 ineffective assistance of counsel, that claim will operate to waive the  
20 attorney-client privilege for the proceeding in which you claim your  
21 counsel was ineffective.

22 While this provision may act as a waiver of the attorney-client privilege with  
23 regards to presently litigating a claim of habeas corpus, there is no additional  
24 provision which allows this to act as an *after the fact remedy* or excuse for the  
25 failure to follow the rules of professional responsibility. Interestingly enough, at  
26 least one Court, when confronted with this very situation, rejected such an  
27 attempt to “get around” the rules of professional responsibility.

28 Whether this attempted waiver “cures” the violation argument is exactly the  
problem that the Court in the case of Tucker v. George, 569 F. Supp. 2d 834 (W.D.  
Wis. 2008) was confronted with and ruled against. In Tucker the Court held:



1 As harsh as this result is for plaintiff, to allow Lawton & Cates to  
2 remain on this case would effectively write the screening requirement  
3 out of Rule 20.1.11 and send a message to attorneys practicing in  
this court that the court does not take the Rules of Professional  
Conduct seriously. I am not willing to endorse such a result.

4 Excerpt from pp. 569 F. Supp.2d 841.

5 Furthermore, and as a matter of record, this Court should be aware that the  
6 Clark County District Attorney's Office took the rather unusual step, in this case,  
7 of having prepared and filed an Answer to the Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus  
8 without first being ordered to do so by the District Court or in compliance with  
9 NRS 34.745, entitled, "Judicial order to file answer and return" which provides,  
10 in pertinent part, as follows:

11 1. If a petition challenges the validity of a judgment of conviction  
12 or sentence and is the first petition filed by the petitioner, the judge  
13 or justice shall order the district attorney or the Attorney General,  
whichever is appropriate, to:

14 (a) File:

15 (1) A response or an answer to the petition; and  
16 (2) If an evidentiary hearing is required pursuant to NRS  
34.770, a return, within 45 days or a longer period fixed by the judge  
or justice; or

17 (b) Take other action that the judge or justice deems appropriate.

18 ...

19 It was in this "Answer" that the District Attorney's Office, perhaps realizing  
20 for the first time its and Ms. Navarro's failure to comply with the Rules of  
21 Professional Conduct, first sought to "notify" Petitioner and his counsel of Ms.  
22 Navarro's employment with their office. It should also be noted that the rogue  
23 "Answer" contains many references, both veiled and not so veiled, to information  
24 and positions relative to the allegations of ineffective assistance of counsel which  
25 could only have come from having discussed the same, or consulted with Ms.  
Navarro and/or from reviewing her files.

26 In addition to all of the above, it is also worth noting that Ms. Navarro's  
27 husband is also employed by the District Attorney's Office. This too adds yet  
28

1 another factor to be considered in deciding the propriety of the District Attorney's  
2 Office representing the State in this matter as there was never an allegation that  
3 he was somehow "screened" from this case or otherwise precluded from obtaining  
4 or disseminating information to anyone connected with this case.

5 5. There is no evidence of any screening or timely screening.

6 Assuming that there is screening in place and it was done in a timely  
7 manner, this Court now and certainly the District Court at the time of the initial  
8 hearing did not have any facts, documents or evidence before it to support such  
9 a claim by the District Attorney's Office. The Answer contains a plethora of  
10 references to screening but with no evidentiary support, such as an affidavit from  
11 Navarro, the person who hired her, or from someone (if there is such a person)  
12 who is responsible for screening, implementing and supervising the process.  
13 Those references to the Answer are:

14 Page 2 ". . . but where screening measures are in place" (ll. 25-26)

15 Page 3 "The record shows . . . the protection of privileged communications  
16 through screening." (ll. 24-26)

17 Page 4 cites to cases which discuss "effectively was screened from the case"  
18 with no cite to the record to support such claims (ll. 19-21).

19 Page 6 "She is Chinese-walled off this pending case." (ll. 15-16).

20 This one line from the hearing was not supported by any reference to any  
21 evidence, it was a mere unsupported statement made at the time by the Deputy  
22 District Attorney covering the hearing and who probably did not have any personal  
23 knowledge whether this statement was true. An evidentiary hearing would resolve  
24 this issue.

25 This failure to specify what the steps were that were taken, if any, and when  
26 they were supposedly implemented is crucial. Even though Ms. Navarro was "off  
27 the case" in May of 2004, she was still in contact with Petitioner as reflected in  
28

1 the letter she sent to Petitioner in June of 2004 regarding the issue of the felon  
2 juror.

3 Did she reveal any information to the District Attorney's Office on the jury  
4 issue? On the issue of when was she hired by the Clark County District  
5 Attorney's Office and in what capacity, the district court should have held an  
6 evidentiary hearing on this and the other issues that were raised.

7 Without having produced any evidence of the screen, the District Attorney's  
8 Office's position falls into the holding of Tucker v. George 569 F. Supp. 2d 834  
9 (W.D. Wis. 2008):

10 In this case, plaintiff has **failed to demonstrate that Lawton &**  
11 **Cates employed a timely screening device** to prevent the  
12 inadvertent disclosure of information from Lautenschlager and Bach.  
13 Notably, although plaintiff asserts that Lautenschlager and Bach  
14 'were, in fact, screened from the matter,' it is unclear when that  
15 screen was put in place or what procedures were implemented. **It**  
16 **appears that, in asserting that Lautenschlager and Bach were**  
17 **'screened,' plaintiff is referring merely to the fact that neither**  
18 **lawyer has had any involvement with the case or access to the**  
19 **file and that both have denied disclosing any information about**  
20 **George to anyone at Lawton & Cates. However, the rule clearly**  
21 **contemplates the implementation of some formal mechanism to**  
22 **isolate the tainted attorney, not merely, not merely a de facto**  
23 **screen that occurred by happenstance.** Accord Craig A. Peterson,  
24 Rebuttable Presumptions and Intra-Firm Screening: The New Seventh  
25 Circuit Approach to Vicarious Disqualification of Litigation Counsel,  
26 59 Notre Dame L. Rev. 399, 411 (1984) (concluding from review of  
27 Seventh Circuit cases that **mere informal understanding as to**  
28 **nonparticipation and uncontradicted affidavits denying past or**  
**future disclosure of confidences within targeted law firm are**  
**insufficient to rebut presumption of intra-firm knowledge.** What  
is striking is that from all appearances, Lawton & Cates took no steps  
to institute such formal procedures with respect to this case when  
Lautenschlager and Bach joined the firm. Arellano has averred that  
he did not think that there was any conflict of interest, but he does  
not explain the basis for this belief. From the court's perspective,  
someone at Lawton & Cates ought to have recognized that because  
Lautenschlager and Bach served as the state's top law enforcement  
officials at the time George was under investigation, they had a  
potential conflict of interest that required formal screening in any  
case the firm had against George. **The firm's failure to institute**  
**formal screening measures at the time Lautenschlager and Bach**  
**joined the firm mandates disqualification.** (Emphasis added)

Excerpt from pp. 569 F. Supp. 2d 840-1

1           6. The District Attorney failed to comply even with the rule they cited (RPC  
2     1.11).

3           RPC 1.11 provides in pertinent part as follows:

4           (a) Except as law may otherwise expressly permit, a lawyer who has  
5           formerly served as a public officer or employee of the government:

6           (1) Is subject to Rule 1.9( c ); and

7           (2) Shall not otherwise represent a client in connection with a matter  
8           in which the lawyer participated personally and substantially as a  
9           public officer or employee, unless the appropriate government agency  
10          gives its informed consent, confirmed in writing, to the  
11          representation.

12          (b) When a lawyer is disqualified from representation under  
13          paragraph (a), no lawyer in a firm with which that lawyer is  
14          associated may knowingly undertake or continue representation in  
15          such a matter unless:

16          (1) The disqualified lawyer is timely screened from any participation  
17          in the matter and is apportioned no part of the fee therefrom; and

18          (2) Written notice is promptly given to the appropriate government  
19          agency to enable it to ascertain compliance with the provisions of this  
20          Rule.

21           There is no indication, at any point, in any of the pleadings filed or in the  
22           record of the hearing, or in any documents presented to either the District Court  
23           or the Nevada Supreme Court, that the District Attorney's Office notified the  
24           Special Public Defender's Office that Ms. Navarro was hired so that the Special  
25           Public Defender would be put on notice and could consent in writing and "enable  
26           it to ascertain compliance with the provision of this Rule." This is at the heart of  
27           the State's argument against the disqualification and the heart of Petitioner's  
28           argument that disqualification is mandated.

          Therefore, even if Rule 1.11 is the one deemed to apply (and it is not a  
"certainty") then there was no compliance, and therefore disqualification is  
warranted.

7. There is further evidence Navarro's loyalties are divided.

Realistically, can Navarro refuse to cooperate with her employer or is the  
Chinese Wall in effect only until such time as any privilege is deemed waived by  
the district attorney's office? If they honestly feel the filing of the Petition for Writ

1 of Habeas Corpus (Post-Conviction) by Petitioner somehow waived any privilege  
2 that existed, did the so called "Chinese Wall" come crashing down because of non-  
3 compliance in the first instance with the Rules of Professional Conduct or  
4 obtaining a ruling by the Court? Unbeknownst to Petitioner, the violation of the  
5 Rules of Professional Conduct occurred long before this Petition was filed. The  
6 compliance with Rule 1.11 was required when Ms. Navarro initially went to work  
7 for the State. This was long before the Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post-  
8 Conviction) was even filed.

9 In this instance, should the district attorney's office be the one to decide  
10 whether any privilege is waived or should the Court, in the first instance, do so in  
11 a properly conducted hearing? As the Ninth Circuit recently stated, although the  
12 issue concerned Brady material, it is equally analogous to the present situation:

13 Moreover, we reject the Inspectors' attempt to dismiss their Brady  
14 duty by downplaying the importance of the evidence. "[I]f there were  
15 questions about the reliability of the exculpatory information, it was  
16 the prerogative of the defendant and his counsel—and not of the  
17 prosecution—to exercise judgment in determining whether the  
18 defendant should make use of it, **"because" [t]o allow otherwise  
19 would be to appoint the fox as henhouse guard.'** DiSimone v.  
20 Phillips, 461 F.3d 181, 195 (2d Cir. 2006). (Emphasis added)

21 Tennison v. City and County of San Francisco, 548 F. 3d 1293, 1306  
22 (C.A. 9 (Cal.) 2008)

23 8. The case law cited by the District Attorney's Office is distinguishable.

24 In Andric v. California, 55 F. Supp. 2d 1056, 1066 (C.D. Cal. 1999),  
25 the Court criticized the decision and reasoning of the Court in the case of In the  
26 Matter of the Grand Jury Investigation of Targets, 918 F. Supp. 1374 case which  
27 is relied upon by the district attorney (cited to on page 5, line 18 of the Answer).  
28 Specifically, the Andric Court held:

29 This Court declines to adopt the results in Targets, for several  
30 reasons. First, it is not correct that the Ninth Circuit has established  
31 a rigid rule that imputed disqualification "does not apply to  
32 government attorneys." As to Weiner, see footnote 11. As to United  
33 States v. Mapelli, supra, the individual AUSA was subject to  
34 disqualification only because he had heard the defendant's  
35 immunized grand jury testimony. Id. At 287-88. Where there is the

1 claimed basis for the disqualification of a lawyer, it is typically  
2 unnecessary to disqualify the rest of the prosecuting office, because  
3 in federal criminal practice the very concept of an AUSA obtaining  
4 immunized testimony from a suspect is based on the understanding  
5 that if the case proceeds to trial other AUSA's, who had no access to  
6 the immunized testimony, will try it. In short, it is contemplated that  
7 ethical walls will be erected. Unlike that scenario, when speaking to  
8 Semien, plaintiffs had no basis to suspect that he would go to work  
9 for the very entity they expected to sue and for the very Legal Unit  
10 that would represent it.

11 Next, the Targets court declined to consider California cases involving  
12 disqualification of private attorneys, because 'California law  
13 recognized that different disqualification rules apply to prosecutors  
14 than to private attorneys.' Targets, supra, at 1379 n. 1. While that  
15 is an ambiguous observation—see below—it is inapplicable here.  
16 Although a government agency, DIR is not a prosecuting office. A  
17 prosecutor's office is deemed to be—or at least required to be—more  
18 balanced in its advocacy than other governmental lawyers. In Berger  
19 v. United States, 295 U.S. 78, 88, 55 S.Ct. 629, 633, 79 L.Ed. 1314  
20 (1935), the Supreme Court noted,

21 [The prosecutor] is the representative not of an ordinary party to a  
22 controversy, but of a sovereignty whose obligation to govern  
23 impartially is as compelling as its obligation to govern at all; and  
24 whose interest, therefore, in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall  
25 win a case, but that justice shall be done.

26 Here, in contrast to the typical function of a prosecutor, the DIR is  
27 the very party to the dispute and its Legal Unit has displayed great  
28 zeal in carrying out its duty of advocacy. There is no doubt that is  
out to win this case, which has involved incendiary accusations (i.e.,  
corruption) against the DIR.

Finally, another major factual distinction that renders Targets  
unpersuasive here is that the U.S. Attorney's Office had 75 lawyers,  
and it was undisputed that almost none of them had any connection  
to the investigation. Here, in contrast, the Legal Unit's entire,  
statewide legal staff has only 30 attorneys. Low contends that this is  
the 'hottest, most talked about case in the office.' *Id.* Who can doubt  
it? Two fired Workers Compensation judges claim there is office-wide  
corruption and take on the Presiding Judge. Any Legal Unit lawyer  
who didn't follow the course of the ensuing donnybrook surely would  
be a candidate for the see-no-evil, hear-no-evil, speak-no-evil annual  
award. Thus, while under the facts in Targets the result is sensible  
and sound, it would be naive and unrealistic to apply that court's  
view about large government agencies here.

Andric v. California, 55 F. Supp. 2d 1056, 1066 (C.D. Cal. 1999)

The U.S. v. Goot, 894 F.2d 231 (7<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1990), decision cited by the District  
Attorney's Office (at p. 5 of the Answer) is also distinguishable from the set of facts  
presented to this Court. Specifically, in Goot, "[B]oth the disqualified attorney and

1 others [in the office] affirmed the facts under oath.” Id. At p. 236. Here, there are  
2 no affirmations offered by Chief Deputy District Attorney Sweetin, who prepared  
3 the rogue Opposition to the Writ of Habeas Corpus; no affirmation by Chief  
4 Deputy District Attorney Owens, who prepared the Answer to the Writ of  
5 Mandamus; no affirmation by Gloria Navarro; and no affirmation by “others in the  
6 office.”

7 The Collier v. Legakes, 98 Nev. 307, 646 P.2d 1219 (1982), decision is  
8 similarly distinguishable (cited to p. 7 of the Answer). Collier was a consolidated  
9 case consisting of three instances of disqualification in three separate instances.  
10 In case one, Collier’s request for disqualification was denied but only *after*  
11 *testimony was received at an evidentiary hearing*; in case two, Crews’ request for  
12 disqualification was denied based upon affidavits submitted in both support and  
13 opposition to the request; in case three, Cardarelli, the district judge granted the  
14 motion to disqualify without holding an evidentiary hearing, which was held to be  
15 a failure to exercise discretion. As argued above, since the district judge refused  
16 to hold an evidentiary hearing in the instant matter, and no affidavits were  
17 submitted by the State, both Collier and Crews are distinguishable, and at best  
18 Cardarelli is the closest, since the denial was ordered by Judge Gates in that case  
19 without having conducted a hearing, which is the same process that he followed  
20 in this case and is admitted to by Respondent’s in the Answer.

21 Finally, the Respondents argue that Petitioner is seeking disqualification  
22 only on the “extreme circumstance” of the “appearance of impropriety” when in  
23 fact that is not the case. Petitioner has presented evidence of not only the  
24 “appearance of impropriety” but also the failure to follow the Rules of Professional  
25 Responsibility which includes the failure to notify, failure to screen and/or timely  
26 screen and the failure to submit any evidence in support of any of their factual  
27 contentions about the screening process being in place.

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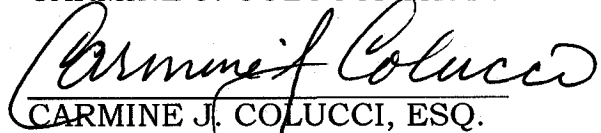
**CONCLUSION**

WHEREFORE, based upon all of the above states reasons, Petitioner respectfully request this Honorable Court:

1. Grant Petitioner's Writ of Mandamus;
2. Disqualify the Clark County District Attorney's Office from this case; and
3. For such other relief as the court deems appropriate under the facts and circumstances of this matter.

DATED this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2009.

CARMINE J. COLUCCI CHTD.



CARMINE J. COLUCCI, ESQ.

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