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RICHARD J. HUGHES JUSTICE COMPLEX  
P. O. BOX 962  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0962  
(609) 292-1011

ROBYN M. HILL  
CHIEF COUNSEL

ISABEL FRANK  
DEPUTY CHIEF COUNSEL

LILLIAN LEWIN  
DONA S. SEROTA-TESCHNER  
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February 22, 1999

## Certified Mail - R.R.R. and Regular Mail

William H. Oliver, Jr., Esq.  
205 Bond Street  
Asbury Park, New Jersey 07712

Re: In the Matter of William H. Oliver, Jr.  
Docket No. DRB 98-475  
**LETTER OF ADMONITION**

Dear Mr. Oliver:

The Disciplinary Review Board has reviewed your conduct in the above matter and has concluded that it was improper. Specifically, on December 27, 1996 you were retained by Kimberly Gerritsen to represent her in a Chapter 7 bankruptcy proceeding. Following two subsequent meetings with your client, at which time Ms. Gerritsen swore under oath that all statements contained in the petition were true and accurate and had an opportunity to review the entire petition with you, you filed a petition on April 15, 1997. Ms. Gerritsen acknowledged receiving a copy of the filed petition. Following a 341(a) hearing in the bankruptcy court, when Ms. Gerritsen testified under oath as to the truthfulness and accuracy of the bankruptcy petition, she contacted your office and requested relief from a denial of the use of one of her secured credit cards. She was advised that a reaffirmation agreement would be prepared. On June 25, 1997, Ms. Gerritsen signed this agreement. At or about the same time she noticed that three signatures contained in her petition were, in fact, not hers. Despite this discovery, the matter proceeded to a discharge of debts on July 28, 1997. You were unaware that the signatures were not Ms. Gerritsen's and at no time did you specifically authorize any nonlawyer in your office to execute these documents on behalf of Ms. Gerritsen. Nevertheless, whenever emergent circumstances would arise, you would allow an office subordinate to execute certain portions of a bankruptcy petition, if you had already obtained preliminary information from your clients and the clients had executed the second page of the petition, which is the document that all debtors must sign to verify the accuracy and truthfulness of the entire petition. By authorizing such action in general, you violated RPC 5.3(a), in that under this authority someone in your office signed Ms. Gerritsen's name on certain pages of the petition.

I/M/O William H. Oliver, Jr.

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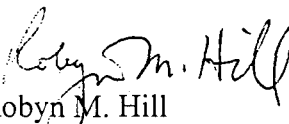
In mitigation, the Board considered that you had no knowledge that the signatures were not Ms. Gerritsen's, that no harm befell your client and that this is the only blemish in your professional career of twenty-six years. The Board, however, regards this as a serious matter and cautions that any repetition of this conduct, even where clients have signed the second page of the petition, will be met with sterner discipline.

Your conduct adversely reflected not only upon you as an attorney, but also upon all members of the bar. Accordingly, the Board has directed the issuance of this admonition to you. R. 1:20-15 (f) (4).

A permanent record of this occurrence has been filed with the Clerk of the Supreme Court and the Board's office. Should you become the subject of any further discipline, it will be taken into consideration.

The Board has also directed that the costs of the disciplinary proceedings be assessed against you. An affidavit of costs will be forwarded under separate cover.

Very truly yours,

  
Robyn M. Hill

RMH:ms

c. Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz  
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District IX Ethics Committee  
Alfred J. D'Auria, Esq., Respondent's counsel  
Kimberly J. Gerritsen