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September 25, 2025

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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
September 25, 2025

Contact: Susan M. Humiston, Director
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DISCIPLINE OF ATTORNEY SOUGHT

ST. PAUL -- A petition for disciplinary action seeking discipline of a Minnesota attorney Ryan Merker was filed today in the Minnesota Supreme Court by Susan M. Humiston, Director of the Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility. The petition was filed September 24, 2025, after a three-member hearing Panel of the Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board found probable cause to believe that public discipline is warranted. A copy of the petition is attached.

Merker has 20 days to answer the allegations. The Minnesota Supreme Court will make the final decision on the appropriate discipline to be imposed, if any. Final action can include dismissal of the petition or discipline ranging from reprimand to disbarment.

- END -

FILE NO.

STATE OF MINNESOTA

IN SUPREME COURT

In Re Petition for Disciplinary Action
against RYAN MERKER,
a Minnesota Attorney,
Registration No. 0399759.

**PETITION FOR
DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

TO THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

At the direction of a Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board Panel, the Director of the Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility (Director) files this petition.

The above-named attorney (respondent) was admitted to practice law in Minnesota on May 11, 2018. Respondent currently practices law in New York, New York.

Respondent has committed the following unprofessional conduct warranting public discipline:

FIRST COUNT

1. In 2014, respondent changed his name from T.N. Thanh Pham to Ryan Merker. Since then, respondent has lived in the United States and Vietnam. In his personal life in the United States and in his capacity as a lawyer, respondent goes by Ryan Merker. In his personal life in Vietnam, respondent goes by T.N. Thanh Pham.

2. Also in 2014, respondent married W.-E.M. (Wolf). Wolf had an aunt, G.J. (sister of Wolf's biological mother) who for eight years was married to a man who was the biological father of D.O. This made D.O. and Wolf stepcousins (because G.J. was D.O.'s stepmother). In 2021, respondent and Wolf divorced.

3. In December 2023, respondent was employed with the C & M law firm.

4. At that time, D.O and Wolf had a conflict. Wolf believed that D.O. had made defamatory statements about Wolf.

5. On behalf of Wolf, and as Wolf's lawyer, respondent sent a December 20, 2023, demand letter to D.O. Respondent's letter alleged that D.O. had defamed Wolf, enclosed a draft complaint respondent had prepared for Wolf, and made a demand for settlement. Respondent told D.O. that unless D.O. accepted the demand or confirmed her willingness to engage in mediation within 14 days, Wolf intended to file the complaint "and will pursue all available remedies under the law . . . and seeking attorneys' fees and costs."

6. Respondent signed the letter "T.N. Thanh Pham" and used the masthead, "SUMMIT ATTORNEY AT LAW."

7. Respondent used the law firm name Summit Attorney at Law knowing it was false. Respondent made up that name. Respondent knew there is no Minnesota law firm named Summit Attorney at Law, and respondent was not affiliated with any firm by that name.

8. Respondent's use of the name T.N. Thanh Pham on the letter was misleading. Although D.O. knew Wolf and had met respondent, she did not know that T.N. Thanh Pham was respondent's name before he changed it in 2014. D.O. knew respondent as Ryan Merker. When D.O met respondent, respondent was married to Wolf. She believed that the letter was from a lawyer named T.N. Thanh Pham at a Summit Law Firm. D.O.'s husband did online research and ascertained that Summit Attorney at Law was not a real law firm. D.O later determined that respondent sent the letter when she saw the shipping label on the envelope that said Ryan Merker was the sender.

9. Respondent did not represent Wolf or have any other involvement in this matter after he sent this letter.

10. Respondent's conduct in making a knowingly false and misleading statement about his identity and the law firm he was affiliated with violated Rules 4.1, 7.1, and 8.4(c), Minnesota Rules of Professional Conduct.

WHEREFORE, the Director respectfully prays for an order of this Court imposing appropriate discipline, awarding costs and disbursements pursuant to the Rules on Lawyers Professional Responsibility, and for such other, further or different relief as may be just and proper.

Humiston, Susan

Susan M. Humiston 2025.09.03

SUSAN M. HUMISTON 14:07:43 -05'00'

DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF LAWYERS
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and

Burke, Tim

Timothy M. Burke 2025.09.03

11:58:06 -05'00'

TIMOTHY M. BURKE

SENIOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

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