STATEMENT

Ira Kaplan, Esq. has violated the Rules of Professional Conduct on several counts and zealously represented a child sex abuser, with absolutely no concern for the welfare and dignity of my child.

On or about March 2005, I fled the marital home barefoot in the snow with my son and a blanket. My husband at the time, Keith Yonos, was harassing and assaulting me and threatened to kill the baby and me. After another incident of domestic violence, I decided again to file for divorce. I found Ira Kaplan, Esq. and met with him at his office in Hackensack, NJ, where I confided in him and discussed intimate personal details. Mr. Kaplan suggested mediation and explained the benefits of divorce through mediation. This violated the Model Code on Domestic Violence and principles of mediation, as domestic violence victims should not be in mediation with their abuser, though I was unaware of this at the time.

Unknowingly, I provided my former husband, Keith Yonos, with the information of Mr. Kaplan’s law firm, so that we could proceed with the divorce and mediation process. He attended an appointment with Ira Kaplan on his own and agreed we would use Ira Kaplan as mediator for our divorce.

My former husband suggested we attend marital therapies instead of filing for divorce. I opposed since we had numerous marital therapies and our marriage was not working.

He begged me to call Mr. Kaplan’s law firm to cancel any appointments to proceed with the divorce mediation. I decided to give our marriage one more chance and called Mr. Kaplan. I spoke with him directly over the phone and told him we were not proceeding with the divorce mediation at the moment. Mr. Kaplan wished us the best.

On or about August 2005, my former husband and I had another domestic violence altercation, for which I filed a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO). I decided this was final and wanted to proceed with the divorce. My former husband went to Mr. Kaplan’s office and informed me that we had an appointment for divorce mediation. I informed my former husband that at this point, I no longer wanted to proceed with mediation, did not want to use Mr. Kaplan’s services, and that we find separate attorneys instead.

To my shock, at the subsequent hearing for the restraining order, Mr. Kaplan appeared as sole attorney representing my former husband. I told Mr. Kaplan that it was unethical that he was representing my husband for his defense of my request of a Final Restraining Order and asked Mr. Kaplan to dismiss himself immediately since it was an obvious conflict of interest (RPC 1.7). Mr. Kaplan told me he was there to “just calm things down” and then help us with the divorce mediation. I informed Mr. Kaplan in the hallway outside the courtroom that there would be no mediation taking place, and that Mr. Yonos needed to find himself another attorney.

Regardless, Mr. Kaplan proceeded to “mediate” the TRO with an agreement between him and my attorney that my husband at the time was to attend marriage counseling, among other arrangements such as me dismissing the TRO. This caused me great anxiety. Under duress, I agreed. We appeared before the judge and a Consent Order was entered.

I informed my former husband that he was not to ever hire Ira Kaplan as his attorney since it was a conflict of interest. I was the one who wanted to hire him for mediation and if we ever again found ourselves filing for divorce Ira Kaplan was neither to be his lawyer, nor mine.

The following March, in 2006, we had yet another domestic dispute and I filed for another TRO. At the hearing, I appeared unrepresented. Mr. Kaplan again appeared representing my former husband to help him dismiss the TRO. I again told Mr. Kaplan that this was a conflict of interest and that he should withdraw immediately as Mr. Yonos’ attorney. Mr. Kaplan told me we were “two wonderful people that could just not get along” and that he just wanted “to help us get a divorce though mediation.” I reiterated to Mr. Kaplan that I did not want mediation and he was to remove himself from any further involvement in our divorce proceedings. Mr. Kaplan became flippant and hostile toward me, then threatened me saying that he was being “kind” to help me in the monthly home and child support while my husband was out of the marital home, but that now he was not going to help me and make sure I encountered difficulty.

Mr. Yonos remained out of the marital home for a period of about two months. An order was entered for pendente lite support of $2,400 per month while we proceeded to file for divorce. While we were conducting the agreement, I informed Mr. Kaplan, in front of my brother Ariel Weber as witness, that I did not want my 1½ year old son to be around Mr. Yonos’ brother and his family in Schenectady, especially not near his brother Gene Caldwell since Mr. Yonos and three of his siblings had conveyed to me that his brother Gene Caldwell had sexually molested him and his sister Karen Lo Datto when they were five and eight years old, and that the rape and molestation was for several years and his mother was a silent witness. I also stated I did not want my young son to be near his best friend Rick Zalucky, since I suspected there was some homosexual activity going on among them. This was entered into the court agreement by consent.

On or about August 30th, 2006 I had Mr. Yonos removed from the marital home after a marriage counseling session with Dr. Joseph Massaro revealed that my husband Keith Yonos was engaging in bisexual activities.

I called Mr. Kaplan’s office and again informed him that it was unethical for him to represent Mr. Yonos and we were not doing mediation. Mr. Kaplan stated he was sorry to hear our marriage did not work out but that he would be talking to “Keith.”

Mr. Yonos had sent me various e-mails during the month of August insisting that Ira Kaplan conduct the divorce through mediation. I informed Mr. Yonos that Mr. Kaplan was not to be doing so. I hired another attorney for the divorce and Mr. Yonos refused to deal with any attorneys I hired, as he was adamant about using Ira Kaplan. It was strange that my former husband was so adamant about using Mr. Kaplan and clear to me something more sinister was at play.

On November 2006, the day before Thanksgiving, I was served at 7:00 AM with divorce papers from the office of Ira Kaplan. Clearly, this was a conflict of interest and violation of attorney ethics. My former husband constantly harassed me and said that “Ira” was “forcing” him to divorce us.

Mr. Kaplan proceeded to instigate what would become a protracted campaign of harassment and denigration of me, throughout years of litigation in order to benefit himself with increased fees. Even when things were close to a settlement, he attempted to provoke a trial to incite “conflict for cash.” Mr. Kaplan is extremely disrespectful, has verbally assaulted me, defamed my character, and slandered me, behaviors that perpetuate to this day. Mr. Kaplan went so far as to say I was mentally ill to subvert abuse.

To my horror, during the course of the proceedings I discovered that my former husband was sexually abusing our young son.

A few months ago, someone who is close to Mr. Kaplan in legal circles, who is a reputable source, informed me that he and my former husband Mr. Yonos have been conducting an inappropriate relationship, including homosexual activity between them and alleged child pornography. This would explain the level of hatred I’ve encountered from Mr. Kaplan.

Mr. Kaplan has zealously represented a batterer and pedophile. Mr. Kaplan specifically concealed my former husband’s sex offender history, DUI, and the domestic violence history in the State of Florida by Mr. Yonos’ of his former girlfriend, Jo Potter. They apparently did Ecstasy and she fled for her life, which was confirmed during a fact-finding trial in 2011-2012. I had told Mr. Kaplan back in 2005 that she suspected that Mr. Yonos had sexually assaulted his nephew. I also disclosed to Mr. Kaplan that I had caught my former husband speaking on the phone with a man named Michael Lauren from San Francisco about a trip they were planning to take and overheard my former husband state, quite graphically, his desire to engage in anal sex.

Mr. Kaplan tried to force me out of the marital home with the baby, attempting to destroy my stability. I was vilified. For example, one late payment and Mr. Kaplan came after me like a pit bull, which cost me $3000 in legal fees, which in turn caused more instability. Mr. Kaplan constantly employed tactics to destabilize me and put my son in jeopardy.

He put the marital home up for sale three times, under market value, causing stress, subjecting me to harassment and the inconvenience of people traipsing through my house, while I had an infant to care for. He caused damage to my quality of life and stability for my child. He stalled and prompted my former husband to avoid signing a quit claim deed for three years, hired a shady Real Estate agent from ReMax and colluded with him and Judge Kenneth Slominsky. They took pictures of the inside of my home, which were beyond the normal scope of what was required for selling a home - pictures of my personal items, documents, private areas of the home, etc. It was a total invasion of privacy and I felt violated.

At present, Mr. Kaplan has gotten the Judge Frances McGrogan and Judge Peter Melchionne to sign illegal ex parte orders. He has gotten the judge Gag-order me for speaking up about child sexual abuse (which violates my constitutional rights), has humiliated my son and without a conscience, has manipulated his status into a childhood of perpetual sodomy, debasement, and despair. He has attempted to pathologize me as a tactic, and has assisted my former husband in completely marginalizing me as our child’s mother. He has made a continuum of false and damaging statements to the judge, which is fraudulent and has cost me dearly in consortium with my child, precious time I can never get back. He has recently gone so far as to file motion in which he is demanding incarceration of me for noncompliance with a fictitious subpoena in an inappropriate, unjust attempt to further bully and harass me. Ironically, it is Mr. Kaplan who refuses to provide me with simple, pertinent information. I am currently unrepresented and Mr. Kaplan takes advantage of this. Such actions are violations of the New Jersey Rules of Professional Conduct including RPC 3.4. Fairness to Opposing Party and Counsel and RPC 8.4. Misconduct.

In sum, Mr. Kaplan has violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct:

1. 4; 1. 6 Confidentiality; 1.7, 1.8, 1.16, 1.18, 2.4 – Conflict of Interest; 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4; 3.5 illegal ex parte communication; 4.1; 4.4a; 7.3; 8.3(d, i) and 8.4.