

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

**IN THE MATTER OF
MATTHEW TAYLOR MORRIS**

VSB DOCKET NO.: 25-000-133208

SUMMARY ORDER CONSENT TO REVOCATION

On October 4, 2024, came Matthew Taylor Morris and presented to the Board an Affidavit Declaring Consent to Revocation of his license to practice law in the courts of this Commonwealth. By tendering his Consent to Revocation at a time when disciplinary charges are pending, he admits that the charges in the attached Notice of Hearing/Certification document are true.

The Board having considered the said Affidavit Declaring Consent to Revocation, and Bar Counsel having no objection, the Board accepts his Consent to Revocation. Accordingly, it is ordered that the license to practice law in the courts of this Commonwealth heretofore issued to the said Matthew Taylor Morris be and the same hereby is revoked, and that the name of the said Matthew Taylor Morris be stricken from the Roll of Attorneys of this Commonwealth.


It is further ORDERED that The Respondent must comply with the requirements of Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-29 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The Respondent shall forthwith give notice by certified mail of the Revocation of his license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia, to all clients for whom he is currently handling matters and to all opposing Attorneys and presiding Judges in pending litigation. The Respondent shall also make appropriate arrangements for the disposition of matters then in his care in conformity with the wishes of his clients. The Respondent shall give such notice immediately and in no event later than 14 days of the effective date of the Revocation, and make such arrangements as are required herein as soon as is practicable and in no event later than 45 days of the effective date of the Revocation. The Respondent shall also furnish proof to the Clerk of the Disciplinary System of the Virginia State Bar within 60 days of the effective date of the Revocation that such notices have been timely given and such arrangements have been made for the disposition of matters.

It is further ORDERED that if the Respondent is not handling any client matters on the effective date of the Revocation, he shall submit an affidavit to that effect within 60 days of the effective date of the Revocation to the Clerk of the Disciplinary System at the Virginia State Bar. The Board shall decide all issues concerning the adequacy of the notice and arrangements required herein. The burden of proof shall be on the Respondent to show compliance. If the Respondent fails to show compliance, the Board may impose an additional sanction of Revocation for failure to comply with the requirements of subparagraph 13-29.

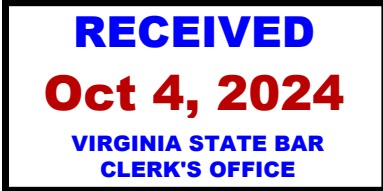
It is further ORDERED that an attested copy of this Order be mailed to the Respondent by certified, regular and electronic mail to his Virginia State Bar address of record, at 1877 Pittsburg Landing, Virginia Beach, VA 23464-8767, and a copy by electronic mail to James O. Broccoletti and a copy by electronic mail to Seth T. Shelley, Assistant Bar Counsel.

ENTERED THIS 4th DAY OF OCTOBER 2024

VIRGINIA DISCIPLINARY BOARD

By **Carolyn V.
Grady**  Digitally signed by Carolyn V. Grady
Date: 2024.10.04 11:32:32 -04'00'

CAROLYN V. GRADY
CHAIR DESIGNATE



VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF
MATTHEW TAYLOR MORRIS

VS B Docket No. 25-000-133208


AFFIDAVIT DECLARING CONSENT TO REVOCATION

I, Matthew Taylor Morris, after being duly sworn, state as follows:

1. I was licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia on October 12, 2012.
2. I submit this Affidavit Declaring Consent to Revocation pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-28 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia.
3. My consent to revocation is freely and voluntarily rendered, that I am not being subjected to coercion or duress, and that I am fully aware of the implications of consenting to the revocation of my license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
4. I am aware that there is currently pending a Disciplinary Proceeding against me pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-22 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, based upon my guilty plea on September 24, 2024, to felony conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute marijuana and felony possession with intent to distribute marijuana in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. My sentencing is scheduled for January 22, 2025. The facts are set forth in the Statement of Facts attached as Exhibit 1.
5. I acknowledge that the material facts upon which the allegations of misconduct are predicated are true.

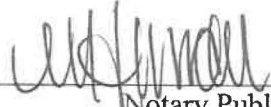
6. I submit this Affidavit and consent to the revocation of my license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia because I know that if the disciplinary proceedings based on the said alleged misconduct were brought or prosecuted to a conclusion, I could not successfully defend them.

Executed and dated on 10/3/24.

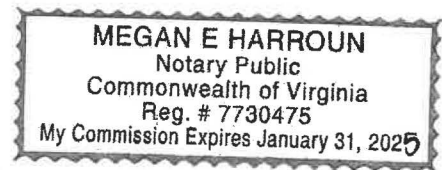

Matthew Taylor Morris
Respondent

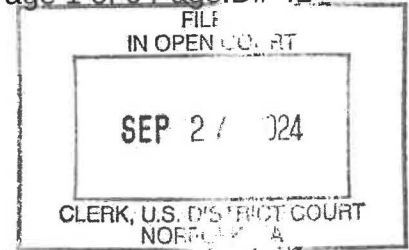
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
CITY/COUNTY OF Virginia Beach, to wit:

The foregoing Affidavit Declaring Consent to Revocation was subscribed and sworn to before me by Matthew Taylor Morris on the 3rd day of October 2024.


Notary Public

My Commission expires: January 31, 2025.





IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Norfolk Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

MATTHEW TAYLOR MORRIS,

Defendant.

Case No. 2:24-cr-97

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The United States and the defendant, MATTHEW TAYLOR MORRIS (MORRIS or the defendant), agree that at trial, the United States would have proven the following facts beyond a reasonable doubt with admissible and credible evidence:

1. Beginning in or about March 2021, and continuing thereafter until in or about May 2022, within the Eastern District of Virginia and elsewhere, the defendant, MATTHEW TAYLOR MORRIS, and his co-conspirators, Donald Rogers, Nicholas Capehart, and Jeffrey Sines, did unlawfully, knowingly, and intentionally combine, conspire, confederate, and agree with each other, and with other persons both known and unknown, to knowingly and intentionally distribute and possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance, which offense involved 50 kilograms of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana, a Schedule I controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(D).

2. The defendant received from the Virginia State Bar a license to practice law in or about October 2012. During all times relevant to the Criminal Information, the defendant was the sole proprietor of Top Tier Law Group, PLLC. During times relevant to the Criminal Information, the defendant maintained a physical office for his law firm at 510 South

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Independence Boulevard, Suite 200, in the City of Virginia Beach, which is within the Eastern District of Virginia.

3. During all times relevant to the Criminal Information, co-conspirator Donald Rogers was the owner of VA Premier Pawn, which was a Federal Firearm Licensee (FFL) that was authorized to sell firearms. Rogers purchased wholesale quantities of THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol) products, including marijuana, THC vape pens, THC wax, and THC edible products, from sources outside the Commonwealth of Virginia. Rogers personally made payments for these shipments, met the shipments, stored the products in the Eastern District of Virginia, and transferred them in smaller quantities to co-conspirators, including Capehart, Sines, and the defendant, for retail sale in the Eastern District of Virginia and elsewhere.

4. In or about 2021, Capehart sold quantities of THC products to retail customers. The defendant, who had known Capehart for years, introduced Capehart to Rogers, initially believing that Capehart could supply Rogers with THC products. As all involved would learn, however, Rogers bought and sold marijuana products in larger quantities than did Capehart, so Rogers began to supply Capehart, as well as others, including the defendant, with THC products.

5. The defendant and Rogers have known one another since approximately 2018. In 2021, after the defendant introduced Rogers to Capehart so that they could work together to distribute marijuana, the defendant referred customers, including his legal clients, to Rogers for the illegal purchase of THC products. Eventually, the defendant offered to Rogers the use of a room in his law office on South Independence Boulevard for the storage of Rogers's THC products. The defendant knew that Rogers was storing marijuana and related products at the law office, among other reasons, because the defendant helped Rogers move shipments of boxes and duffle bags filled with THC products into the law office.

6. In exchange for his use of the law office, Rogers paid a portion of the law office's monthly rent for several months beginning in late 2021. The defendant gave Rogers a key to the law office to facilitate Rogers's access to it. Until Rogers began using another facility to store THC products, in or about May 2022, Rogers stored approximately 1,000 pounds of marijuana and marijuana products in the defendant's law office. The street value of the marijuana stored at the defendant's law office ranged in value between \$800,000 and \$1.6 million.

7. Rogers also stored at the defendant's law office, with the defendant's full knowledge and consent, cash proceeds from the illegal sale of THC products. In one photograph taken in the defendant's law office, co-conspirator Nicholas Capehart posed with drug proceeds in excess of one hundred thousand dollars cash, which was being counted to prepare for Rogers's purchase of a new wholesale shipment of THC products from an out-of-state supplier. The defendant's diplomas and legal credentials appear on the wall behind Capehart.

8. In addition to storing THC products that Rogers purchased wholesale, the defendant received from Rogers smaller quantities of THC products, approximately 15 pounds per month, that the defendant himself sold to retail customers. In all, Rogers sold the defendant approximately 70 pounds of THC products.

9. The defendant received at least one firearm from Rogers, to include a Sig Sauer P229 Legion 9mm pistol.

10. When the defendant possessed a firearm, he knew that he was an unlawful user of controlled substances, namely, Adderall (amphetamine salts), cocaine, opiates, and THC. The defendant habitually kept at least one firearm in his law office while he allowed Rogers to store THC products there.


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11. On or about April 20, 2021, Capehart, who was vacationing in Las Vegas, Nevada, sought advice from the defendant on sending marijuana products back to the Hampton Roads region of the Eastern District of Virginia. Although the defendant did not represent Capehart in any civil or criminal case, Capehart sought the defendant's advice because Capehart knew that the defendant was an attorney. In text messages, the defendant told Capehart to commingle the marijuana products among "some type of souvenirs and buy some Saran Wrap and wrap whatever you put it in well." The defendant further advised Capehart to address the package not to the defendant, but to the defendant's law firm, to send the package to the defendant's law office, and to "[w]rite legal mail on there somewhere too," reasoning that this would "make it privileged and the cops would have a hell of a time getting a warrant to get around that privilege."

12. Cell phones belonging to Rogers, Capehart, and Sines, lawfully seized pursuant to federal search warrants, contained evidence that the defendant, Rogers, Capehart, Sines, and others unlawfully conspired to knowingly and intentionally distribute and possess with intent to distribute marijuana and marijuana products in the Eastern District of Virginia and elsewhere.

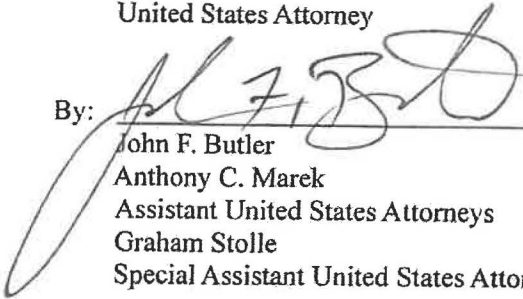
13. The defendant's participation in the events described was undertaken knowingly, intentionally, and unlawfully, and not as a result of an accident, mistake, or other innocent reason.

14. The defendant acknowledges that the foregoing statement of facts does not describe all of the defendant's conduct relating to the offense charged in this case nor does it identify all of the persons with whom the defendant may have engaged in illegal activities.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica D. Aber
United States Attorney

By:



John F. Butler
Anthony C. Marek
Assistant United States Attorneys
Graham Stolle
Special Assistant United States Attorney



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