



SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

Case No. S96Y1545.

Atlanta

SEP 05 1996

The Honorable Supreme Court met pursuant to adjournment.

The following order was passed:

IN THE MATTER OF: JOHNNY R. PANNELL

Respondent Johnny R. Pannell admittedly violated Standard 33 of Bar Rule 4-102 (d) in that he wrote and disseminated to the public a letter on his law office letterhead, advising that participation in a pyramid-type scheme did not violate commercial gambling laws, and that money received from participation in the program was tax-free. Respondent failed to disclose in this letter that he was a participant in the program and had received financial benefits from that participation. After a criminal investigation by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, prosecutors publicly declared the program to be in violation of OCGA § 16-12-38. Moreover, monies received through participation in the program were deemed subject to taxation by the United States Internal Revenue Service.

Respondent filed a petition for voluntary discipline admitting that his conduct violated Standard 33 of Bar Rule 4-102 (d), and submitting that the imposition of a public reprimand is the appropriate discipline to be imposed. Among the many mitigating factors shown are the lack of prior discipline, remorse for his conduct, cooperation during the pendency of these proceedings, and an emotional trauma during the time of the violation due to a sudden family illness.

Accordingly, it is hereby ordered that pursuant to Bar Rule 4-220 (c) Respondent be given a public reprimand and that said reprimand be administered in open court by a judge of the superior court in the county of Respondent's residence.

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

Clerk's Office, Atlanta



I hereby certify that the above is a true extract from the minutes of the Supreme Court of Georgia

Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto affixed the day and year last above written.

, Chief Deputy Clerk