



**BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY  
OF THE  
SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE**

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**RELEASE OF INFORMATION**  
**RE: WILLIAM PRESTON SUTHERLAND, BPR #2437**  
**CONTACT: EILEEN BURKHALTER SMITH**  
**BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
**615-361-7500**

April 21, 2016

**DAVIDSON COUNTY LAWYER CENSURED**

On April 13, 2016, William Preston Sutherland, an attorney licensed to practice law in Tennessee, received a Public Censure from the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Tennessee Supreme Court. Within ninety (90) days, Mr. Sutherland shall pay restitution to the client for fees paid and funds borrowed in an amount of \$5,456.71, and provide proof of such payment to Disciplinary Counsel.

Mr. Sutherland's law license was suspended in 1997 and has never been reinstated. After the suspension of his license, Mr. Sutherland did investigative and legal work for one client and billed the client \$4,435.42 for the work, which the client paid. Mr. Sutherland also borrowed \$1,021.29 from the client for his personal expenses and failed to repay the loan.

By these acts, William Sutherland has violated Rules of Professional Conduct 5.5 (unauthorized practice of law) and 1.8 (conflict of interest, business transaction). Mr. Sutherland is hereby Publicly Censured for these violations. A Public Censure is a rebuke and warning to the attorney, but it does not affect the attorney's ability to practice law.

Sutherland 42177-5 rel.doc

IN DISCIPLINARY DISTRICT V  
OF THE  
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY  
OF THE  
SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE

IN RE: WILLIAM PRESTON SUTHERLAND, BPR NO. 2437  
Respondent, an attorney licensed  
to practice law in Tennessee  
(Davidson County)

FILE NO.42177-5-ES

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PUBLIC CENSURE

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The above complaint was filed against William Preston Sutherland, an attorney licensed to practice law in Tennessee, alleging certain acts of misconduct. Pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, the Board of Professional Responsibility considered these matters at its meeting on March 11, 2016.

Mr. Sutherland's law license was suspended in 1997 and has never been reinstated. Between 2009 and 2014, Mr. Sutherland did legal work for one client, including drafting pleadings, drafting correspondence, legal research, and legal analysis and advice. Mr. Sutherland sent at least 17 emails to the client regarding the legal work, met with the client at least two times, and billed the client \$4,435.42 for the work, which the client paid. Included in the briefs and correspondence drafted by Mr. Sutherland was a petition for certification to the United States Supreme Court and correspondence to the Clerk of the United States Supreme Court. In 2013, while providing work to the client, Mr. Sutherland borrowed \$1,021.29 from the client for Mr. Sutherland's personal expenses. Mr. Sutherland has failed to repay the loan.

By the aforementioned acts, William Sutherland has violated Rules of Professional Conduct 5.5 (unauthorized practice of law) and 1.8 (conflict of interest, business transaction) and

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is hereby Publicly Censured for these violations. Additionally, within ninety (90) days, Mr. Sutherland shall pay restitution to the client for fees paid and funds borrowed, in an amount of \$5,456.71, and provide proof of such payment to Disciplinary Counsel.

FOR THE BOARD OF  
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

  
Michael King, Chair

4-13-2016  
Date