

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS  
EASTERN DIVISION

SIMON BERNSTEIN IRREVOCABLE )  
INSURANCE TRUST DTD 6/21/95 )

Plaintiff, )

v. )

HERITAGE UNION LIFE INSURANCE )  
COMPANY, )

Defendant, )

Case No. 13 cv 3643

Honorable Amy J. St. Eve  
Magistrate Mary M. Rowland

HERITAGE UNION LIFE INSURANCE )  
COMPANY, )

Counter-Plaintiff, )

v. )

SIMON BERNSTEIN IRREVOCABLE )  
INSURANCE TRUST DTD 6/21/95 )

Counter-Defendant )

and, )

FIRST ARLINGTON NATIONAL BANK, )  
as Trustee of S.B. Lexington, Inc. Employee )  
Death Benefit Trust, UNITED BANK OF )  
ILLINOIS, BANK OF AMERICA, )  
successor in interest to "LaSalle National )  
Trust, N.A., TED BERSTEIN, individually )  
and as alleged Trustee of the Simon )  
Bernstein Irrevocable Insurance Trust Dtd. )  
6/21/95 and ELIOT BERNSTEIN, )

Third Party Defendants )

ELIOT IVAN BERNSTEIN, )

MOTION TO INTERVENE PURSUANT  
TO FED. R. CIV. P. 24 BY  
INTERESTED PARTY BENJAMIN P.  
BROWN, CURATOR AND  
ADMINISTRATOR AD LITEM OF  
THE ESTATE OF SIMON L.  
BERNSTEIN

)  
 )  
 Cross-Plaintiff )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 TED BERNSTEIN, individually and as )  
 alleged Trustee of the Simon Bernstein )  
 Irrevocable Insurance Trust Dtd. 6/21/95 )  
 )  
 Cross-Defendant )  
 and )  
 )  
 PAMELA B. SIMON, DAVID B. SIMON )  
 both Professionally and Personally, ADAM )  
 SIMON both Professionally and Personally, )  
 THE SIMON LAW FIRM, TESCHER & )  
 SPALLINA, P.A., DONALD TESCHER )  
 both Professionally and Personally, )  
 ROBERT SPALLINA both Professionally )  
 and Personally, LISA FRIEDSTEIN, JILL )  
 IANTONI, S.B. LEXINGTON, INC., )  
 EMPLOYEE DEATH BENEFIT TRUST, )  
 S.T.P ENTERPRISES, INC., S.B. )  
 LEXINGTON, INC., EMPLOYEE DEATH )  
 BENEFIT TRUST, S.T.P. ENTERPRISES, )  
 INC., S.B. LEXINGTON, INC., )  
 NATIONAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION, )  
 INC. (OF FLORIDA) NATIONAL )  
 SERVICE ASSOCIATION, INC, )  
 (OF ILLINOIS) AND JOHN AND )  
 JANE DOE'S )  
 )  
 Third Party Defendants )  
 )  
 \_\_\_\_\_ )  
 BENJAMIN P. BROWN, as Curator and )  
 Administrator Ad Litem of the Estate of )  
 Simon L. Bernstein, )  
 )  
 Intervenor. )

**MOTION TO INTERVENE PURSUANT TO FED. R. CIV. P. 24 BY INTERESTED**  
**PARTY BENJAMIN P. BROWN, CURATOR AND ADMINISTRATOR AD LITEM OF**  
**THE ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN**

NOW COMES Benjamin P. Brown, as Curator and *Administrator Ad Litem* of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein (“Brown”), by and through his undersigned counsel, and files this Motion to Intervene pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 24, and in support thereof, states as follows:

1. Simon L. Bernstein, a resident of Florida, died in September of 2012. His estate was admitted to probate in Palm Beach County, Florida on October 2, 2012. Letters of Curatorship in favor of Benjamin Brown were issued on March 11, 2014. (A copy of the Letters of Curatorship filed in the Probate Court is attached hereto as Exhibit A).

2. At the time of Simon Bernstein’s death, there was in effect a life insurance policy issued by Capitol Bankers Life Insurance Company as policy number 1009208 (the “Policy”). The Policy’s current proceeds are \$1,689,070.00, less an outstanding loan. (*See* Dkt. No. 17 at ¶17).

3. Upon Mr. Bernstein’s death, several of his children filed a Complaint in the Circuit Court of Cook County against the insurer claiming a right to the proceeds of the Policy as alleged beneficiaries under a purported trust they describe as the “Simon Bernstein Irrevocable Insurance Trust” (the “Trust”). The Bernstein children acknowledge that they are unable to produce an executed Trust document under which they assert their rights. (*See* letter of Third Party Defendant Robert Spallina, Esq. to Defendant Heritage Union Life Insurance Company, attached as Exhibit B).

4. Defendant, Heritage Union Life Insurance Company, as successor to Capitol Bankers Life Insurance Company removed the case to this Court on June 26, 2013 and filed an Interpleader action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1335(a), in conjunction with its Answer to Plaintiff’s Complaint. (*See* Dkt. No. 17). In its Complaint for Interpleader, Heritage asserts that it cannot ascertain whether the Plaintiff is a proper beneficiary of the Policy:

“Presently the Bernstein Trust has not been located. Accordingly [Defendant] is not aware whether the Bernstein Trust even exists, and if it does whether its title is the “Simon Bernstein Trust, N.A.,” as listed as the Policy’s contingent beneficiary (or otherwise), and/or if Ted Bernstein is in fact its trustee. In conjunction, [Defendant] has received conflicting claims as to whether Ted Bernstein had authority to file the instant suit on behalf of the Bernstein Trust.”

(Dkt. No. 17 at ¶20).

5. In the absence of a valid trust and designated beneficiary, the Policy proceeds are payable to Petitioner, the Estate of Simon Bernstein, as a matter of law. *See New York Life Ins. Co. v. RAK*, 180 N.E. 2d 470 (Ill. 1962) (where beneficiary no longer existed, proceeds of life insurance policy passed to the decedent’s estate); *Harris v. Byard*, 501 So.2d 730 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1987) (in the absence of a named beneficiary, no basis in law for directing payment of insurance policy proceeds to anyone other than decedent’s estate for administration and distribution).

6. On May 23, 2014, Mr. Brown was appointed *Administrator Ad Litem* to act on behalf of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein (the “Estate”) and was specifically directed by the Probate Court in Palm Beach County “to assert the interests of the Estate in the Illinois Litigation involving life insurance proceeds on the Decedent’s life.” (A copy of the Order Appointing *Administrator Ad Litem* is attached hereto as Exhibit C). Mr. Brown now seeks to Intervene in the instant litigation to assert the rights of the Estate as beneficiary of the Policy.

7. Brown is entitled to Intervention of Right under Fed. R. Civ. P. 24(a)(2) because the Estate is entitled to the Policy proceeds as a matter of law. But for Plaintiff’s claim, the Estate would have no competing claim to the proceeds of the Policy, as it is the default beneficiary under both Florida and Illinois law.

8. The Plaintiff’s and Brown’s interests in the outcome of this action are diametrically opposed: the Policy proceeds will either be payable to the Plaintiff or to the Estate,

which must be allowed to intervene as a matter of right to assert its rival claim. Disposing of this action without this Intervention will impair Mr. Brown's ability to protect the Estate's direct claim on the interpleaded funds and to carry out the mandate of the Florida Probate Court "to assert the interests of the Estate" in the present litigation. The parties to this action will not adequately represent Brown's interest in that the purported Trust will seek to defeat the Estate's claim and the insurer has no stake in the identity of the payee.

9. Brown is also entitled to Permissive Intervention under Fed. R. Civ. P. 24(b)(1)(B) in that the Estate shares with the main action a common question of law and fact, to wit, the proper disposition of life insurance proceeds in excess of \$1,000,000.00.

10. Brown's intervention will not destroy diversity of citizenship.

11. A pleading that sets out the claim for which intervention is sought is attached hereto as Exhibit D.

WHEREFORE, proposed Intervenor, Benjamin P. Brown, as Curator and *Administrator Ad Litem* on behalf of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein, moves this Honorable Court for an Order permitting him to intervene in this action pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 24 (a)(2) or 24 (b)(1)(B).

Dated: June 5, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ James J. Stamos

One of the attorneys for Proposed Intervenor,  
Benjamin P. Brown, Curator and *Administrator Ad Litem* on behalf of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein

James J. Stamos (ARDC 03128244)  
Kevin P. Horan (ARDC 06310581)  
STAMOS & TRUCCO LLP  
One East Wacker Drive, Third Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Telephone: (312) 630-7979  
Facsimile: (312) 630-1183

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on June 5, 2014, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using CM/ECF. I also certify that the foregoing is being served this day on all counsel of record identified below via transmission of Notices of Electronic Filing generated by CM/ECF or in some other authorized manner.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

PROBATE DIV.  
CASE NO.: 50 2012 CP 004391 XXXX SB

IN RE: ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN,  
Deceased.

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LETTERS OF CURATORSHIP IN FAVOR OF BENJAMIN BROWN

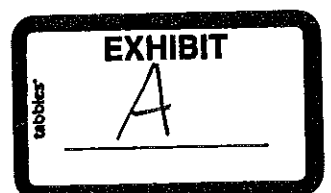
WHEREAS, Co-Personal Representatives of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein were permitted to resign by Order of this Court on February 18, 2014. A copy of the Order is attached hereto as Exhibit "A"; and

WHEREAS, this Court found it necessary for the appointment of a Curator and appointed Benjamin Brown, Esq. as Curator of this Estate on February 25, 2014. A copy of the Order is attached hereto as Exhibit "B"; and

WHEREAS Benjamin Brown as Curator appointed by Order of this Court has performed all acts prerequisite to the issuance of Letters of Curatorship as a legally qualified Curator of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein;

NOW, THEREFORE, I the undersigned Circuit Judge do grant Benjamin Brown (hereinafter Curator), the Curatorship of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein with the following powers:

- (a) To collect and preserve assets of the Estate;
- (b) To administer the assets of the Estate;
- (c) To evaluate all discovery requests related to the Decedent for the purposes of asserting objections and privileges on behalf of the Estate, if necessary;
- (d) To appear on behalf of the Estate in the following two cases: Case No. 502012CA013933 (Circuit Court, Palm Beach County, FL) and Case No. 13CV3643 (U.S. Dist. Ct. Northern Dist.,



Illinois),

Further, pursuant to Fla. Stat. §733.603, Curator shall proceed expeditiously with the duties described herein and except as otherwise specified by the Florida Probate Code, or ordered by the Court, shall do so without adjudication, Order or direction of the Court. The Curator may invoke the jurisdiction of this Court to resolve questions concerning the Estate or its administration.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Delray Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida,  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day of March, 2014.

SIGNED & DATED

Martin Colin, Circuit Judge

MAR 11 2014  
JUDGE MARTIN H. COLIN

Copies furnished to:

Alan Rose, Esq., PAGE, MRACHEK, 505 So. Flagler Drive, Suite 600, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, [arose@pm-law.com](mailto:arose@pm-law.com) and [mchandler@pm-law.com](mailto:mchandler@pm-law.com);

John Pankauski, Esq., PANKAUSKI LAW FIRM, 120 So. Olive Avenue, Suite 701, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, [courtfilings@pankauskilawfirm.com](mailto:courtfilings@pankauskilawfirm.com);

Peter M. Feaman, Esq., PETER M. FEAMAN, P.A., 3615 W. Boynton Beach Blvd., Boynton Beach, FL 33436, [service@feamanlaw.com](mailto:service@feamanlaw.com);

Eliot Bernstein, 2753 NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Boca Raton, FL 33434, [iviewit@iviewit.tv](mailto:iviewit@iviewit.tv);

William H. Glasko, Esq., Golden Cowan, P.A., Palmetto Bay Law Center, 17345 S. Dixie Highway, Palmetto Bay, FL 33157, [bill@palmettobaylaw.com](mailto:bill@palmettobaylaw.com).



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FL

IN RE: ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN,  
Deceased.

PROBATE DIVISION

CASE NO. 502012CP004391LXXXXSB

ELIOT IVAN BERNSTEIN, PRO SE

DIVISION: IY (COLIN)

Petitioner

vs.

TESCHER & SPALLINA, P.A., (and all parties,  
associates and of counsel); ROBERT L. SPALLINA  
(both personally and professionally); DONALD R.  
TESCHER (both personally and professionally);  
THEODORE STUART BERNSTEIN (as alleged  
personal representative, trustee, successor trustee)  
(both personally and professionally); et. al.

Respondents.

ORDER ON PETITION FOR RESIGNATION AND DISCHARGE

This cause was heard by the Court on the co-Personal Representatives' Petition for Resignation and Discharge on February 18, 2014, and the Court, having heard arguments of counsel, and otherwise being fully advised in the premises, ORDERS AND ADJUDGES AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Petitioners' request to accept their resignation is ACCEPTED. The co-Personal Representatives' Letters of Administration are hereby revoked.

2. ~~Written notice shall be given to the successor fiduciary from the later of the date of this order or the appointment of a successor fiduciary.~~ <sup>BY MARCH 4, 2014</sup> <sup>(initials)</sup> the resigning co-Personal Representatives shall deliver to the successor fiduciary all property of the Estate, real, personal, tangible or intangible, all of the documents and records of the Estate and all records associated with any property of the Estate, regardless of whether such property has been previously distributed, transferred, abandoned or otherwise disposed of.

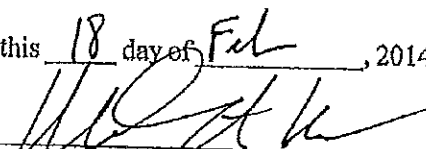
3. The Petitioners' request to reserve ruling on their discharge is ACCEPTED.

4. The resigning co-Personal Representatives shall file an accounting and a Renewed Petition for Discharge within sixty (60) days after the date hereof, which Renewed Petition for Discharge shall be verified and recite that the letters of administration have been revoked, the resigning co-Personal Representatives have surrendered all undistributed Estate assets, records, documents, papers and other property of or concerning the Estate to the successor fiduciary as set forth above, and the amount of compensation paid or to be paid by the resigning co-Personal Representatives pursuant to Probate Rule 5.430(g). Such accounting shall include cash and transactions from the commencement of administration of the Estate and ending as of the date the accounting is submitted.

5. The resigning co-Personal Representatives shall serve notice of filing and a copy of the accounting and Renewed Petition for Discharge on all interested parties and the notice shall state that the objection to the Renewed Petition for Discharge must be filed within thirty days after the later of service of the petition or service of the accounting on that interested person pursuant to Probate Rule 5.430(i).

6. The successor Personal Representative or Curator is authorized to pay a \$ \_\_\_\_\_ retainer to the accountant whom the Successor Personal Representative or Curator selects to provided the accounting which this Order requires. The accountant's hourly rate and compensation shall be subject to court approval.

DONE AND ORDERED in Delray Beach, Florida, this 18 day of Feb, 2014.

  
Circuit Judge

cc: Parties on attached service list

*Wtk*  
*THE COURT NEEDS TO ENFORCE THIS ORDER.*

SERVICE LIST

Theodore Stuart Bernstein (e-mail)  
Life Insurance Concepts  
950 Peninsula Corporate Circle, Suite 3010  
Boca Raton, Florida 33487

Alan B. Rose, Esq. (E-mail)  
Page Mrachek Fitzgerald Rose Konopka &  
Dow PA  
505 S Flagler Dr Ste 600  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

Eliot Bernstein (U.S. Mail)  
2753 NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
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Highland Park, Illinois 60035

Pamela Beth Simon (U.S. Mail)  
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Jill Iantoni (U.S. Mail)  
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Mark R. Manceri, Esq. (E-mail)  
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2929 East Commercial Boulevard, Ste. 702  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33308

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

PROBATE DIV.

CASE NO.: 50 2012 CP 004391 XXXX SB

IN RE: ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN,  
Deceased.

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**ORDER ON "INTERESTED PERSON" WILLIAM STANSBURY'S  
MOTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A CURATOR  
OR SUCCESSOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE**

THIS CAUSE came on to be heard by this Honorable Court on Wednesday, February 19, 2014, on the Motion of William Stansbury, as an "Interested Person" in the Estate, For the Appointment of a Curator or Successor Personal Representative, and the Court having received evidence, reviewed the file, heard argument of counsel, and being otherwise duly advised in the premises, it is

ORDERED and ADJUDGED:

1. The Motion of William Stansbury is hereby granted.
2. The Court hereby appoints Benjamin Brown, Esq., Matwiczuk & Brown, LLP, 625 No. Flagler Drive, Suite 401, West Palm Beach, FL 33401 as Curator of this Estate pursuant to §733.501 Fla. Stat. (2013) and Florida Probate Rule 5.122(a).
3. Reasonable fees for the Curator are capped at \$350.00 per hour.

EXHIBIT "B"

2/25/14

4. Fee payments will be made in \$5,000.00 increments. Any fee requests in excess of that amount for any given period will require a court hearing.

5. In accordance with §733.501(2) Fla. Stat. (2013), bond is hereby set in the amount of \$ None.

DONE and ORDERED in West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida on this \_\_\_ day of February, 2014.

**SIGNED & DATED**  
MARTIN COLIN  
Circuit Court Judge FEB 25 2014  
JUDGE MARTIN H. COLIN

*Copies to:*

Alan Rose, Esq., PAGE, MRACHEK, 505 So. Flagler Drive, Suite 600, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, [arose@pm-law.com](mailto:arose@pm-law.com) and [mchandler@pm-law.com](mailto:mchandler@pm-law.com);

John Pankauski, Esq., PANKAUSKI LAW FIRM, 120 So. Olive Avenue, Suite 701, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, [courtfilings@pankauskilawfirm.com](mailto:courtfilings@pankauskilawfirm.com);

Peter M. Feaman, Esq., PETER M. FEAMAN, P.A., 3615 W. Boynton Beach Blvd., Boynton Beach, FL 33436, [service@feamanlaw.com](mailto:service@feamanlaw.com);

Eliot Bernstein, 2753 NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Boca Raton, FL 33434, [iviewit@iviewit.tv](mailto:iviewit@iviewit.tv);

William H. Glasko, Esq., Golden Cowan, P.A., Palmetto Bay Law Center, 17345 S. Dixie Highway, Palmetto Bay, FL 33157, [bill@palmettobaylaw.com](mailto:bill@palmettobaylaw.com).

LAW OFFICES

TESCHER & SPALLINA, P.A.

BOCA VILLAGE CORPORATE CENTER I  
4855 TECHNOLOGY WAY, SUITE 720  
BOCA RATON, FLORIDA 33431

ATTORNEYS  
DONALD R. TESCHER  
ROBERT L. SPALLINA  
LAUREN A. GALVANI

TEL. 561-997-7008  
FAX: 561-997-7308  
TOLL FREE: 888-997-7008  
WWW.TESCHERSPALLINA.COM

SUPPORT STAFF  
DIANE DUSTIN  
KIMBERLY MORAN  
SUANN TESCHER

December 6, 2012

VIA FACSIMILE: 803-333-4936

Attn: Bree  
Claims Department  
Heritage Union Life Insurance Company  
1275 Sandusky Road  
Jacksonville, IL 62651

Re: Insured: Simon L. Bernstein  
Contract No.: 1009208

Dear Bree:

As per our earlier telephone conversation:

- We are unable to locate the Simon Bernstein Irrevocable Insurance Trust dated June 1, 1995, which we have spent much time searching for.
- Mrs. Shirley Bernstein was the initial beneficiary of the 1995 trust, but predeceased Mr. Bernstein.
- The Bernstein children are the secondary beneficiaries of the 1995 trust.
- We are submitting the Letters of Administration for the Estate of Simon Bernstein showing that we are the named Personal Representatives of the Estate.
- We would like to have the proceeds from the Heritage policy released to our firm's trust account so that we can make distributions amongst the five Bernstein children.
- If necessary, we will prepare for Heritage an Agreement and Mutual Release amongst all the children.
- We are enclosing the SS4 signed by Mr. Bernstein in 1995 to obtain the EIN number for the 1995 trust.

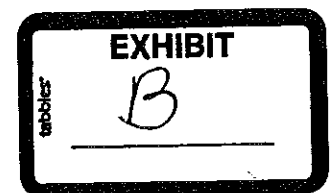
If you have any questions with regard to the foregoing, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

  
ROBERT L. SPALLINA

RLS/km

Enclosures





FROM: Peter M. Feaman P.A. 7345664 TO: 2741410 06/23/2014 10:43:47 #17897 P.003/006

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

IN RE:

CASE NO.: 50 2012 CP 004391 XXXX SB  
PROBATE DIV.

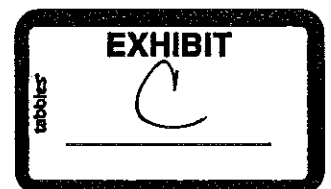
ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN,  
Deceased.

**ORDER APPOINTING ADMINISTRATOR AD LITEM TO  
ACT ON BEHALF OF THE ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN  
TO ASSERT THE INTERESTS OF THE ESTATE IN THE ILLINOIS  
LITIGATION (CASE NO. 13CV3643, N.D. ILL. E. DIV.) INVOLVING  
LIFE INSURANCE PROCEEDS ON THE DECEDENT'S LIFE**

THIS CAUSE came before this Honorable Court on May 23, 2014 upon the Curator's Amended Motion for Instructions/Determination regarding Estate Entitlement to Life Insurance Proceeds and upon the Petition for Appointment of Administrator Ad Litem filed by William Stansbury, in the U.S. District Court case styled *Simon Bernstein Irrevocable Insurance Trust DTD 6/21/95 v. Heritage Union Life Insurance*, Case No. 13-cv-03643, currently pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District Court of Illinois, and the Court having heard argument of counsel and being otherwise duly advised in the premises, it is

ORDERED and ADJUDGED that


I. The Court appoints Benjamin P. Brown, Esq., who is currently serving as Curator, as the Administrator Ad Litem on behalf of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein to assert the interests of the Estate in the Illinois Litigation involving life insurance proceeds on the Decedent's life in the U.S. District Court case styled *Simon Bernstein Irrevocable Insurance Trust DTD 6/21/95 v. Heritage Union Life Insurance*, Case No. 13-cv-03643, pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District Court of Illinois.



2. For the reasons and subject to the conditions stated on the record during the hearing, all fees and costs incurred, including for the Curator in connection with his work as Administrator Ad Litem and any counsel retained by the Administrator Ad Litem, will initially be borne by William Stansbury.

3. The Court will consider any subsequent Petition for Fees and Costs by William Stansbury as appropriate under Florida law.

DONE AND ORDERED in Palm Beach County, Florida this 23 day of May, 2014.

  
MARTIN COLIN  
Circuit Court Judge

Copies to:  
Alan Rose, Esq., PAGE, MRACIIEK, 505 So. Flagler Drive, Suite 600, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, [arose@pmi-law.com](mailto:arose@pmi-law.com) and [mehandler@pmi-law.com](mailto:mehandler@pmi-law.com);  
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Peter M. Feaman, Esq., PETER M. FEAMAN, P.A., 3615 W. Boynton Beach Blvd., Boynton Beach, FL 33436, [service@feamanlaw.com](mailto:service@feamanlaw.com);  
Eliot Bernstein, 2753 NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Boca Raton, FL 33434, [eliot@eliotbernst.com](mailto:eliot@eliotbernst.com);  
William H. Glasko, Esq., Golden Cowan, P.A., Palmetto Bay Law Center, 17345 S. Dixie Highway, Palmetto Bay, FL 33157, [bill@palmettobaylaw.com](mailto:bill@palmettobaylaw.com);  
John P. Morrissey, Esq., 330 Clematis St., Suite 213, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, [john@jpmorrisseylaw.com](mailto:john@jpmorrisseylaw.com);  
Benjamin P. Brown, Esq., Matwiczak & Brown, LLP, 625 No. Flagler Drive, Suite 401, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, [bbrown@matwiczaklaw.com](mailto:bbrown@matwiczaklaw.com)



IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
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EASTERN DIVISION

SIMON BERNSTEIN IRREVOCABLE )  
INSURANCE TRUST DTD 6/21/95 )

Plaintiff, )

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HERITAGE UNION LIFE INSURANCE )  
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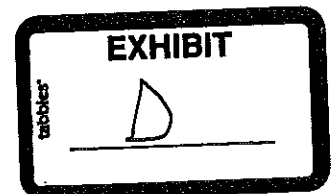
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Third Party Defendants )

Case No. 13 cv 3643

Honorable Amy J. St. Eve  
Magistrate Mary M. Rowland

INTERVENOR COMPLAINT FOR  
DECLARATORY JUDGMENT BY  
INTERESTED PARTY BENJAMIN P.  
BROWN, CURATOR AND  
ADMINISTRATOR AD LITEM OF  
THE ESTATE OF SIMON L.  
BERNSTEIN



ELIOT IVAN BERNSTEIN, )

Cross-Plaintiff )

v. )

TED BERNSTEIN, individually and as )  
alleged Trustee of the Simon Bernstein )  
Irrevocable Insurance Trust Dtd. 6/21/95 )

Cross-Defendant )

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both Professionally and Personally, ADAM )  
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SERVICE ASSOCIATION, INC, )  
(OF ILLINOIS) AND JOHN AND )  
JANE DOE'S )

Third Party Defendants )

\_\_\_\_\_  
BENJAMIN P. BROWN, as Curator and )  
Administrator Ad Litem of the Estate of )  
Simon L. Bernstein, )

Intervenor. )

**INTERVENOR COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY JUDGMENT BY INTERESTED  
PARTY BENJAMIN P. BROWN, CURATOR AND ADMINISTRATOR AD LITEM OF  
THE ESTATE OF SIMON L. BERNSTEIN**

NOW COMES Benjamin P. Brown, as Curator and *Administrator Ad Litem* of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein (“Brown”), by and through his undersigned counsel, and states as follows for his Complaint for Declaratory Judgment pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 57 against the purported Simon Bernstein Irrevocable Trust DTD 6/21/95 (the “Trust”) and Heritage Union Life Insurance Company:

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. This declaratory judgment action is filed pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 57 and seeks a declaration that there exists no designated beneficiary of the life insurance policy proceeds at issue in the instant action and that the proceeds of the policy must be paid to the Estate of Simon Bernstein, currently pending in the Circuit Court of Palm Beach County, Florida.

### **PARTIES AND JURISDICTION**

2. Benjamin P. Brown is an Intervening Party pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 24 and is a resident of Palm Beach County, Florida.

3. The purported Simon Bernstein Irrevocable Insurance Trust is alleged in Plaintiff’s original Complaint to have been established in Chicago, Illinois.

4. Heritage Union Life Insurance Company, a Minnesota corporation, is the successor corporation to the insurer that issued the life insurance policy (the “Policy”) at issue in the instant litigation.

5. The death benefit payable under the Policy exceeds \$1 million dollars.

6. This Court has jurisdiction over this matter in that it is a civil action wherein the parties are all citizens of different states and the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000.00. 28 U.S.C. §1332(a).

### BACKGROUND

7. Simon L. Bernstein, a resident of Florida, died in September of 2012. His estate was admitted to probate in Palm Beach County, Florida on October 2, 2012. Letters of Curatorship in favor of Benjamin Brown were issued on March 11, 2014. (A copy of the Letters of Curatorship filed in the Probate Court is attached hereto as Exhibit A).

8. At the time of Simon Bernstein's death, there was in effect a life insurance policy issued by Capitol Bankers Life Insurance Company as policy number 1009208 (the "Policy"). The Policy's current proceeds are \$1,689,070.00, less an outstanding loan. (*See* Dkt. No. 17 at ¶17).

9. After Mr. Bernstein's death, several of his children filed a Complaint in the Circuit Court of Cook County claiming a right to the proceeds of the Policy as alleged beneficiaries under a purported trust they describe as the "Simon Bernstein Irrevocable Insurance Trust" (the "Trust"). The Bernstein children acknowledge that they have been unable to produce an executed Trust document under which they assert their rights. (*See* letter of Third Party Defendant Robert Spallina, Esq. to Defendant Heritage Union Life Insurance Company, attached as Exhibit B).

10. Defendant, Heritage Union Life Insurance Company, as successor to Capitol Bankers Life Insurance Company, removed the case to this Court on June 26, 2013 and filed an Interpleader action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1335(a), in conjunction with its Answer to Plaintiff's Complaint. (*See* Dkt. No. 17). In its Complaint for Interpleader, Heritage asserts the following:

"Presently the Bernstein Trust has not been located. Accordingly [Defendant] is not aware whether the Bernstein Trust even exists, and if it does whether its title is the "Simon Bernstein Trust, N.A.," as listed as the Policy's contingent beneficiary (or otherwise), and/or if Ted Bernstein is in fact its trustee. In conjunction, [Defendant] has received conflicting claims as to whether Ted Bernstein had authority to file the instant suit on behalf of the Bernstein Trust."

(Dkt. No. 17 at ¶20).

11. On May 23, 2014, Mr. Brown was appointed *Administrator Ad Litem* to act on behalf of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein (the “Estate”) and, more specifically, directed by the Probate Court in Palm Beach County “to assert the interests of the Estate in the Illinois Litigation involving life insurance proceeds on the Decedent’s life.” (A copy of the Order Appointing Administrator Ad Litem is attached hereto as Exhibit C).

12. Plaintiff cannot prove the existence of a Trust document; cannot prove that a trust was ever created; thus, cannot prove the existence of the Trust nor its status as purported beneficiary of the Policy. In the absence of a valid Trust and designated beneficiary, the Policy proceeds are payable to Petitioner, the Estate of Simon Bernstein, as a matter of both Illinois and Florida law. *See New York Life Ins. Co. v. RAK*, 180 N.E. 2d 470 (Ill. 1962) (where beneficiary no longer existed, proceeds of life insurance policy passed to the decedent’s estate); *Harris v. Byard*, 501 So.2d 730 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1987) (in the absence of a named beneficiary, no basis in law for directing payment of insurance policy proceeds to anyone other than decedent’s estate for administration and distribution).

13. Intervenor Benjamin P. Brown seeks a judgment from this Court declaring that no valid beneficiary is named under the Policy and that the proceeds of the Policy must therefore be paid to the Estate.

WHEREFORE, Intervenor, Benjamin P. Brown, as Curator and *Administrator Ad Litem* on behalf of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein, requests this Court to enter judgment as follows:

- A. Declare that there is no valid beneficiary designated under the Policy;
- B. Declare that the proceeds of the Policy are payable to the Estate of Simon Bernstein;

- C. For Intervenor's costs and expenses incurred herein, including reasonable attorneys' fees, and such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper.

Dated: June 5, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ James J. Stamos

One of the attorneys for Proposed Intervenor,  
Benjamin P. Brown, Curator and Administrator Ad  
Litem on behalf of the Estate of Simon L. Bernstein

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on June 5, 2014, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using CM/ECF. I also certify that the foregoing is being served this day on all counsel of record identified below via transmission of Notices of Electronic Filing generated by CM/ECF or in some other authorized manner.