UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

In re: Business of the Court

General Order No. 20-4

ORDER SUSPENDING REQUIREMENT TO OBTAIN ORIGINAL SIGNATURES BY DEBTORS FOR ELECTRONIC FILINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In light of the President of the United States and the Governor of the State of Missouri having declared a public health emergency in response to the spread of the COVID-19 virus, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health authorities having advised public and private entities to take precautions in order to reduce the spread of the virus, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Missouri recognizes the part it must play in helping to reduce the spread of the virus. Therefore,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

- For all documents that require original signatures by the debtor under Local Rule 9011 or otherwise, the Court hereby **SUSPENDS** the requirement that the Filer secure the prospective debtor's original signature prior to electronically filing such documents PROVIDED that the Filer of the documents has:
 - a. Transmitted the entire document(s) to the debtor for review and signature;
 - b. Verified with the debtor that they have received and reviewed the entire document(s) to be signed;
 - Communicated with the debtor regarding the substance and purpose of the signed document(s) and received express authorization from the debtor to file the document(s);
 - d. Obtained the debtor's digital signature via any commercially available digital signature software that provides signature authentication and (subsequent to the filing) maintains a copy of the digitally signed document(s) in the case file; or obtained the express written permission (including by electronic mail) from the debtor to affix his or her signature to the document(s), and will maintain a copy of such written consent in the file; or
 - e. Obtained in his or her possession at the time of filing an image format or other facsimile of the entire signed document(s), including the signature

page(s), received electronically (including by electronic mail or facsimile transmission) from the debtor, and will maintain a hard copy.

- 2. The filing of the document(s) with an electronic signature constitutes a certification by the Filer under Bankruptcy Rule 9011, the applicable Missouri Rules of Professional Conduct, and this Order that the Filer has complied with paragraph 1 of this Order.
- 3. On written request (including electronic transmission) by the Court or any party in interest, the Filer shall promptly provide evidence to the requesting party of compliance with the terms of this Order.

This Order shall remain in effect until further order of this Court.

SO ORDERED

KA⁽HY A. SURRATT-STATES Chief U.S. Bankruptcy Judge

Barry S. Schermer United States Bankruptcy Judge

CHARLES E. RENDLEN, III U.S. Bankruptcy Judge