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**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO**

JEFFREY KEENER  
Plaintiff

RONNIE LEONHARDT JR  
Defendant

Case No: CV-23-990558

Judge: WILLIAM T MCGINTY

**JOURNAL ENTRY**

96 DISP.OTHER - FINAL

ORDER DECLARING PLAINTIFF A VEXATIOUS LITIGATOR. O.S.J.  
COURT COST ASSESSED AS DIRECTED.

PURSUANT TO CIV.R. 58(B), THE CLERK OF COURTS IS DIRECTED TO SERVE THIS JUDGMENT IN A MANNER  
PRESCRIBED BY CIV.R. 5(B). THE CLERK MUST INDICATE ON THE DOCKET THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF ALL  
PARTIES, THE METHOD OF SERVICE, AND THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS SERVICE.

*O. S. J.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**FILED**  
2024 MAY -7 9 1:12  
CLERK OF COURTS  
CUYAHOGA COUNTY

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO**

JEFFREY KEENER,	)	CASE NO.: CV 23 990558
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	JUDGE: WILLIAM T. MCGINTY
	)	
vs.	)	<b><u>FINAL APPEALABLE ORDER</u></b>
	)	<b><u>AND OPINION</u></b>
RONALD J. LEONHARDT, JR.,	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

**Plaintiff is a “Vexatious Litigator” Pursuant to O.R.C. 2323.52.**

Courts of Common Pleas are empowered to have a person declared a “vexatious litigator” pursuant to O.R.C. 2323.52. Per the statute, conduct is “vexatious” if, in pertinent part, “(a) [t]he conduct obviously serves to harass or maliciously injure; or (b) [t]he conduct is not warranted under existing law and cannot be supported by a good faith argument for an extension, modification, or reversal of existing law.” O.R.C. 2323.52(A)(2). In this context, a “vexatious litigator” is:

\* \* \* any person who has habitually, persistently, and without reasonable grounds engaged in vexatious conduct in a civil action or actions, \* \* \* in the \* \* \* court of common pleas, whether the person or another person instituted the civil action or actions, and whether the vexatious conduct was against the same party or against different parties in the civil action or actions.

O.R.C. 2323.52(A)(3).

Defendant’s Motion references at many lawsuits against CCM, its CEO, Ron Leonhardt, Jr., and its employee Ilya Palatnik. These include:

1. *Jeffrey A. Keener v. Cross Country Mortgage, et al.*, Lorain Comm. Pls. No. 22CV205615;
2. *Jeffrey A. Keener v. Goldwater Bank, et al.*, Cuyahoga Comm. Pls. No., CV 22 963436;

3. *Jeffrey Allen Keener v. Berkshire Hathaway Real Estate, et al.*, Lorain Comm. Pls. No. 22CV206514;
4. *Jeffrey Allen Keener v. Berkshire Hathaway Real Estate, et al.*, Lorain Comm. Pls. No. 22CV206826;
5. *Jeffrey Allen Keener v. Ilya Palatnik, et al.*, Lorain Comm. Pls. No. 22CV207232;
6. *Mr. Jeffrey Allen Keener v. Cross Country Mortgage LLC. et al.*, Cuyahoga Comm. Pls. No. CV 23 987156;
7. *Jeffrey Keener v. Ronnie Leonhardt Jr, Owner Cross Country Mortgage LLC*, Cuyahoga Comm. Pls. No. CV 23 990558.

Each of Plaintiff's lawsuits – which include the case at bar – have been dismissed as meritless and devoid of any factual allegations necessary to substantiate any cause of action against the Defendant, his company (“CrossCountry Mortgage LLC”), or its employees that have been the subject of Plaintiff's consistent filings. Notably, the Lorain County Court of Common Pleas has found Plaintiff's previous filings – which are similarly deficient to the pleadings at issue here – to be nothing more than “unintelligible gallimaufry”; “frivolous”, “rambling”, and having alleged “no intelligible cause(s) of action.” (*Aug. 24, 2022, Order*, Lorain Comm. Pls. No. 22CV206514; and *Sep. 27, 2022, Order*, Lorain Comm. Pls. 22CV206826). Moreover, the Lorain County Court of Common Pleas previously warned Plaintiff in its January 11, 2023, Order that his habitual and malicious filing of these non-sensical, baseless actions was, by definition, “vexatious.” (*See Jan. 11, 2023, Order*, Lorain Comm. Pls. 22CV207232). According to the Court, the only reason it did not declare Plaintiff a vexatious litigator in that order was the fact it was not permitted to do so *sua sponte*. (*Id.*). And even while the Court determined that it was “compelled to issue sanction” against Plaintiff for his conduct up-to that point, it “resist[ed] the temptation to do so” hoping “dismissal \* \* \* with prejudice, will end the matter once and for all.” (*Id.*).

Unfortunately, despite the strong language admonition from the Lorain County Court of

Common Pleas. Plaintiff has shown he has no intention of stopping his habitual, persistent, and utterly baseless filing of lawsuits against the Defendant; his company, CrossCountry Mortgage LLC; and/or his employees. The evidence establishes that Plaintiff has filed seven (7) state court lawsuits that are not warranted under existing law and cannot be supported by a good faith argument for an extension, modification, or reversal of existing law. These seven (7) frivolous common pleas cases are substantially more than enough to satisfy the standards set forth in R.C. 2323.52 to substantiate a claim for vexatious litigation. *See Roo v. Sain*, 2005-Ohio-2436, 2005 Ohio Ap. Lexis 2320, ¶18 (10<sup>th</sup> Dist.) (“Separate, repetitive actions are not necessary for a vexatious litigator finding, and such a finding can be based upon actions in a single case.”).

In light of the foregoing, it is clear that Plaintiff is an individual for whom Ohio’s vexatious litigator statute, O.R.C. 2323.52, was designed. His documented history of abusing the court system has been habitual, persistent, without reasonable grounds, and used to harass and maliciously injure this Defendant, his company, and his employees. Accordingly, Plaintiff meets the definition of a vexatious litigator under Ohio Rev. Code §2323.52(A)(3). It is therefore **ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED** as follows:

1. The Plaintiff’s Complaint is **DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE**.
2. This Court, pursuant to Ohio Rev. Code §2323.52, declares Plaintiff Jeffrey Keener a vexatious litigator. Consistent with that designation, Jeffrey Keener is ordered indefinitely prohibited from doing any of the following without first obtaining leave of Court to proceed:
  - a. Instituting legal proceedings in the Ohio Court of Claims or in a Court of Common Pleas, Municipal Court, or County Court;

