Wigdor LLP Filed a Complaint against Attorney General Letitia James and Former Chief of Staff Ibrahim Kahn

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On December 15, 2022, Wigdor LLP client Sofia Quintanar, a former Deputy Press Secretary for New York State Attorney General Letitia James, filed a lawsuit against Ibrahim Khan, Attorney General James's former Chief of Staff, for sexual assault. The complaint also names the Office of the New York State Attorney General, Attorney General James and the James Campaign as defendants for permitting and/or failing to prevent Mr. Khan's assault of Ms. Quintanar.

As alleged in the complaint, on November 17, 2021, Ms. Quintanar and Mr. Khan attended a political fundraiser in Brooklyn, New York. Mr. Kahn asked to speak privately to Ms. Quintanar outside the venue. While there, he placed his hand on Ms. Quintanar's shoulder and forcibly kissed her, shoving his tongue down her throat. Ms. Quintanar pushed him back with both hands, asking, "Aren't your married? Don't you have kids? What are you doing?" Mr. Khan ignored Ms. Quintanar's objection and, once again, moved forward to forcibly kiss Ms. Quintanar, who had to step back to avoid him. Upset and afraid, Ms. Quintanar went back inside, hoping she would be safe inside the crowded venue. But Mr. Khan persisted, sitting next to Ms. Quintanar, trying to whisper in her ear and following her around.

Over time, Ms. Quintanar learned that she may not have been Mr. Khan's only victim. She discovered that in 2017, Mr. Khan had been accused of sexually assaulting a female co-worker when he was Chief of Staff for then Public Advocate James. Ms. Quintanar also learned that Mr. Khan sexually assaulted a female colleague at the Attorney General's Office.

While Mr. Khan was suspended in October 2022 pending an investigation into the assaults, the Attorney General's Office went to great lengths to protect Mr. Khan, deflecting press reports by calling the truthful allegations against Mr. Khan rumors and misleading reporters as to the reasons for Mr. Khan's absence. Most remarkably, the Attorney General's Office permitted Mr. Khan to resign and claim that he was naturally leaving the office after the Attorney General's first term for a job in the private sector.

Some of you may have some questions regarding the legal claims, so we have made an effort here to address in advance those issues. As of November 24, 2022, the Adult Survivors Act ("ASA") opened a window for Ms. Quintanar to bring assault and battery claims because Mr. Khan's actions constituted sexual offenses. So, while those causes of action happened on November 17, 2021, and assault and battery claims have a one-year statute of limitations, the ASA permits the filing of those claims now as timely.

Moreover, Ms. Quintanar brought claims against the Office of the Attorney General, Attorney General James and the James Campaign because they had, under the law, a duty to protect Ms. Quintanar from Mr. Khan's actions and, as alleged, were negligent in the hiring, retention, and supervision of him. Furthermore, under the State and City Human Rights Laws, the Attorney General's Office and the James

Campaign are liable as employers for the actions of Mr. Khan. Finally, you will see that there is a complaint filed in state court as well as a notice of intention to file in the Court of Claims. Certain claims against the State or the Attorney General's Office require that they be filed in the Court of Claims as opposed to state court hence the two separate filings.

A copy of the court filing and the notice of intention to file in the Court of Claims can be read here:

ON THE RECORD:

Statement of Douglas H. Wigdor and Valdi Licul:

"This case is not about politics. It is about abuse of power, the absence of appropriate oversight, and the vindication of the rights of Ms. Quintanar. We will leave no stone unturned in our quest for justice and accountability."

Statement of Sofia Quintanar:

"With the filing of this complaint, I hope to increase the visibility and strength of women of color having a voice in the #MeToo movement. We are less likely to come forward in these situations because those in positions of power have historically thought less of us. While I fear the effect that this might have on my career, I know that fear should never stand in the way of doing what is right. I hope I can give other survivors the courage to find their voice and hold those in positions of power responsible for their actions when they demonstrate the belief that they are above the law."

Media Coverage:

12.15.22: New York Times: Letitia James Protected Aide From Harassment Claims

12.15.22: Daily Beast: New York Attorney General's Former Top Aide Sued for Alleged Sexual Assault

12.15.22. New York Daily News: N.Y. Attorney General Letitia James protected chief of staff

12.15.22: New York Post: Ex-aide sues NY AG Letitia James over alleged sexual harassment cover-up

12.16.22: Fox News: Former aide sues NY AG Letitia James

12.16.22: Globe and Mail: NY Attorney General Letitia James sued after former adviser's #MeToo exit

12.16.22: NY Law Journal: Former AG Press Secretary Sues Former Boss for Alleged Sexual Harassment, and Letitia James for Failing to Prevent Assault