

IN RE: RICHARD T. CONNORS
NO. BD-2013-112

(S.J.C. Judgment of Reinstatement entered by Justice Botsford on December 10, 2014¹)

SUMMARY¹

On November 12, 2013, the respondent was convicted after trial by jury in Salem District Court of assault with a dangerous weapon in violation of G. L. c. 265, § 15B(b). The respondent was sentenced to one year in the house of correction. As a result of his conviction, the respondent was temporarily suspended from the practice of law on December 18, 2013.

The respondent and his wife were parked at a mall in Danvers, Massachusetts, preparing to leave. The respondent became engaged in a dispute with a man waiting to park in the space over whether the respondent's wife was taking too long. The respondent walked to the other man's car and pointed a handgun at the man's face.

The respondent's wife had been seriously ill since 2008 and continued to suffer from various medical issues and the side effects of her treatments. At the time of the incident in issue, the respondent believed that his wife was being subjected to an angry verbal assault and a barrage of vulgarities by the other driver. The respondent overreacted to hostile words directed at his wife, who he believed had done nothing to provoke the verbal attack. The respondent also believed that he was going to be assaulted and acted in what he thought was self-defense.

In mitigation, the respondent's criminal conduct did not involve the practice of law. The respondent was incarcerated upon his conviction on November 12, 2013, has successfully completed an anger management course through the Essex County correctional services program and was placed on home-arrest with community service.

On March 4, 2014, bar counsel and the respondent filed with the Board of Bar Overseers a stipulation of facts and a joint recommendation for a suspension of nine months, with reinstatement conditional upon service of the respondent's full sentence, including parole, and further that he not apply for a permit or license to carry a firearm of any kind so long as he is a member of the bar of the Commonwealth. On April 28, 2014, the board voted to accept the parties' stipulation and recommendation. On June 2, 2014, the Supreme Judicial Court for Suffolk County (Botsford, J.) entered an order of term suspension suspending the respondent for nine months, retroactive to December 18, 2013, with the conditions agreed to by the parties.

¹ Compiled by the Board of Bar Overseers based on the record filed with the Supreme Judicial Court.