

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
48<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
FRANKLIN CIRCUIT COURT  
DIVISION I  
CIVIL ACTION NO. 21-CI-00645**

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**TIA TAYLOR, et al.,**

**PLAINTIFF**

**v.**

**ORDER**

**KKR & CO., L.P., et al.**

**DEFENDANT**

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This matter is before the Court on remand from Chief Justice John Minton, who has asked this Court to review and rule on an Affidavit for Designation of Special Judge under KRS 26A.020. The Court has reviewed the Affidavit, and considered the surrounding circumstances, and concluded that the interests of justice would best be served by voluntary recusal in this action. This is a highly contentious lawsuit, which has been characterized by an extraordinary degree of conflict and disputes among counsel from its inception. The Court has done its best to be an impartial decision maker, and to base its decisions on the facts and the law. It is now apparent that the Court's own role in this litigation will be yet another such area of conflict, which will detract from the ability of the judicial system to render justice to the litigants and the public. The Kentucky Supreme Court has recently announced a new standard governing judicial recusal in *Abbott, Inc. v. Guiguis*, 626 S.W.3d 475, 484-85 (Ky. 2021), which counsels that recusal is the best course when such questions arise. While the Court believes many of the allegations of the Affidavit are incorrect or taken out of context, the Court is convinced that the best course under the *Abbott* case is to recuse, so that the complete focus of the lawsuit will remain on the merits of the claims and defenses of the parties. Accordingly, this Court recuses from further action in this case, and this matter shall be transferred to Judge Thomas D. Wingate

of Division II of this Court for all further proceedings pursuant to Local Rule 5.04 of the Franklin Circuit Court. IT IS SO ORDERED.



PHILLIP J. SHEPHERD, JUDGE  
Franklin Circuit Court, Division I

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