The Honorable Thomas T. Glover 1 Chapter 11 2 3 4 5 UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON 6 7 8 In Re: 9 Case No. 08-16620 Warwick Properties LLC, 10 Debtor-in-possession. 11 12 Federal Trade Commission, Adversary Proceeding No. 09-____ 13 Plaintiff, **COMPLAINT** 14 v. 15 Warwick Properties LLC 7683 SE 27th Street, Suite 241 16 Mercer Island, Washington 98040, 17 Heidi Fogg 9022 North Mercer Way 18 Mercer Island, Washington 98040, 19 and John Stefanchik 9022 North Mercer Way 20 Mercer Island, Washington 98040, 21 Defendants. 22 The Federal Trade Commission ("FTC" or "the Commission"), a creditor and party-in-23 interest, files this Complaint against the debtor, Warwick Properties LLC (the "Debtor" or 24 "Warwick"), its manager, Heidi Fogg ("Fogg"), and her husband, John Stefanchik 25 ("Stefanchik"), and seeks to pierce the corporate veil of the Debtor, in reverse, to enforce the 26 Commission's lien against certain property held in the name of the Debtor. The Debtor is 27 nothing but a shell, which Stefanchik and Fogg used to hold their residence in an improper 28 FTC's Complaint - Page 1 FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

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1	attempt to shelter their house from the claims of creditors such as the FTC. Stefanchik and Fogg			
2	abused Warwick's corporate form. Accordingly, Warwick also should be liable to the FTC on			
3	the judgment entered against Stefanchik, which arose from his deceptive practices.			
4	Alternatively, the Commission seeks to recover as fraudulent transfers various payments and			
5	transfers made by Stefanchik and/or Fogg to or on behalf of the Debtor. Finally, the			
6	Commission seeks a ruling from this Court that any purported assignment of Stefanchik's rights			
7	and interests in the Debtor to Fogg does not alter or impair the Commission's judgment lien or			
8	claims in this Adversary Proceeding.			
9	JURISDICTION AND VENUE			
10	1. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 157 and 1334.			
11	This Adversary Proceeding is a core proceeding pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 157(b)(2)(A).			
12	2. Venue in the Western District of Washington is proper under 28 U.S.C.			
13	§ 1409(a).			
14	3. This Adversary Proceeding relates to <i>In re Warwick Properties LLC</i> , Chapter 11			
15	Case No. 08-16620 (Bankr. W.D. Wash.), now pending in this Court (the "Bankruptcy Case").			
16	The FTC is a creditor with a secured claim against the Debtor as a result of a judgment the			
17	Commission obtained against Stefanchik, and others, in the United States District Court for the			
18	Western District of Washington in the case Federal Trade Commission v. Stefanchik., et al.,			
19	Case No. 2:04-cv-01852-RSM (W.D. Wash.) (the "Stefanchik Case").			
20	THE PARTIES			
21	4. The FTC is an independent agency of the United States government created by			
22	statute. 15 U.S.C. §§ 41-58. The FTC is charged, inter alia, with enforcement of Section 5(a) o			
23	the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45(a), which prohibits unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or			
24	affecting commerce.			
25	5. The Commission also enforces the Telemarketing Sales Rule, 16 C.F.R. Part 310,			
26	which prohibits deceptive or abusive telemarketing acts or practices.			
27	6. The Commission is authorized to initiate federal district court proceedings to			
28	enjoin violations of the FTC Act and the Telemarketing Sales Rule, and to secure such equitable FTC's Complaint - Page 2 FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION			

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relief as may be appropriate in each case, including restitution for injured consumers. 15 U.S.C. §§ 53(b), 57b, 6102(c), and 6105(b).

- 7. Warwick Properties LLC is a chapter 11 Debtor in the Bankruptcy Case.
- 8. Heidi Fogg is the manager of the Debtor and the spouse of Stefanchik. Fogg currently resides at 9022 North Mercer Way, Mercer Island, Washington 98040.
- 9. John Stefanchik is the spouse of Fogg and a defendant in the Stefanchik Case. Stefanchik currently resides at 9022 North Mercer Way, Mercer Island, Washington 98040.

COURSE OF PROCEEDINGS AND DEFENDANTS' CONDUCT

- A. The FTC's False, Misleading, and Deceptive Advertising Case
- 10. On August 24, 2004, the Commission filed a complaint in the United States

 District Court for the Western District of Washington (the "District Court") against Stefanchik, a corporation he organized, Beringer Corporation ("Beringer"), and several other defendants.

 Federal Trade Comm'n v. Stefanchik, et al., Case No. 2:04-cv-01852-RSM (W.D. Wash.). All defendants except Stefanchik and Beringer entered into stipulated judgments to resolve the FTC's claims against them.
- 11. In the complaint, the Commission alleged that the defendants violated the FTC Act and the Telemarketing Sales Rule by making false, misleading and deceptive claims that consumers could quickly make large amounts of money in a short amount of time by purchasing the Stefanchik Program, which Stefanchik had marketed since the early 1990s.
- 12. The Stefanchik Program included a book written by Stefanchik, video and audio tapes, course materials, and workshops, all of which purported to teach consumers how to buy and sell privately held mortgages. Stefanchik claimed it was the easiest way to make \$10,000 each month while working only a few hours in one's spare time.
- 13. Although the Commission did not file the Stefanchik Case until 2004, Stefanchik became aware of his potential liability for the Stefanchik Program in November 2000.
- 14. On April 3, 2007, the FTC obtained a judgment against Stefanchik and Beringer in the amount of \$17,775,369. Stefanchik and Beringer subsequently appealed the District Court's ruling.

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officers/license renewal in a timely manner. *See* Certified Certificate of Administrative Dissolution (Ex. D).

- 25. Warwick purportedly cured those defaults by filing an application for reinstatement on July 5, 2007. *See* Certified Application for Reinstatement (Ex. E).
- 26. The Secretary of State filed another certificate of administrative dissolution against Warwick in 2008 when Warwick's registered agent resigned, and Warwick failed to appoint another agent. *See* Certified Resignation of Registered Agent (Ex. F); and Certified Certificate of Administrative Dissolution (Ex. G).
- 27. On or about June 10, 2008, Warwick appointed a new registered agent. *See* Certified Statement of Change for Registered Agent or Office (Ex. H).
- 28. After the certificate of formation, either Fogg or Heidi Stefanchik is listed as the manager of Warwick in each of its filings with the Washington Secretary of State. *See* Exhibits. C, E, and H.
- 29. Warwick has not, however, filed an annual report with the Secretary of State for the State of Washington since July 2007. Warwick's next annual report was due, upon information and belief, on or about July 13, 2008.
 - C. Activities Stefanchik and Fogg Conducted Through Warwick
 - 30. Warwick's stated purpose was to invest in real property. Exhibits C and E.
 - 1. Warwick Receives A Gift From Stefanchik
- 31. Stefanchik, through one of his corporate entities, PSD Properties LLC ("PSD"), transferred property to Warwick on or about May 15, 2001. This parcel was transferred from PSD to Warwick for no consideration. *See* Certified Quit Claim Deed (Ex. I). PSD purchased this property in March of 2000 for approximately \$620,000.
- 32. As indicated on Exhibit I, the parcel's lot description is: Lot 30, Mercer Island Country Club Estates, Division 1 (the "Country Club Property").
- 33. Warwick then obtained a loan in the amount of \$465,000 from HomeStreet Bank ("HomeStreet") using the Country Club Property as security. *See* Certified Deed of Trust dated May 24, 2001 (Ex. J).

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Deed of Trust dated June 10, 2004 (Ex. O).

27

- 42. Upon information and belief, the second loan by Washington Mutual to Warwick was used, in part, to replace its initial loan of \$1,225,000. *See* Substitution of Trustee/Deed of Reconveyance dated July 9, 2004 (Ex. P).
- 43. On or about July 14, 2005, Warwick obtained a line of credit (up to \$500,000) from HomeStreet, which was secured by the Mercer Island Property. *See* Deed of Trust dated July 14, 2005 (Ex. Q).
- 44. The funds from the line of credit extended by HomeStreet were used, in part, to make certain improvements and/or repairs to the Mercer Island Property.
- 45. Upon information and belief, the payments due on each of the loans encumbering the Mercer Island Property were made using the personal income of Stefanchik. Upon information and belief, payments due to Washington Mutual and HomeStreet for the Mercer Island Property were also paid from proceeds of real property sales and/or operations of another corporate entity controlled by Fogg and/or Stefanchik PSD.

3. Warwick Receives Another Gift from PSD

- 46. PSD purchased a home in Seattle through a foreclosure sale on or about April 30, 2002. PSD paid approximately \$34,001 for this parcel.
- 47. PSD transferred this parcel to Warwick on or about December 1, 2004 for no consideration. *See* Certified Quit Claim Deed (Ex. R). The parcel is described in the land records as: Lot 9, Block 3, Interlaken (the "Seattle Property").
- 48. On or about November 29, 2004, Warwick obtained a loan in the amount of \$479,050 from HomeStreet, which was secured by the Seattle Property. *See* Deed of Trust dated November 29, 2004 (Ex. S).
- 49. Warwick no longer holds title to the Seattle Property. Warwick transferred the property to Fogg, on or about October 10, 2005. *See* Certified Quit Claim Deed (Ex. T).
 - 50. Warwick received no consideration from Fogg for the Seattle Property.

D. Warwick Is Merely A Shell Limited Liability Company

51. As noted above, Warwick, at times, faced administrative dissolution for failing to comply with state filing requirements for limited liability companies. $See \P\P$ 24 to 29 supra. FTC's Complaint - Page 7 Federal Trade Commission

- 52. Since its formation, Warwick has not had employees.
- 53. Warwick's manager, Fogg, has not, for at least one year prior to the filing of Warwick's bankruptcy petition, received a salary or compensation from Warwick. *See* SOFA Item No. 3.c.
- 54. Although Fogg is named as the manager of Warwick, upon information and belief, Stefanchik directed and controlled the activities carried out in Warwick's name. In fact, Stefanchik was so involved with Warwick that he was sworn in to testify as one of the Debtor's representatives at the meeting of creditors. *See* Transcript of 341 Meeting (Ex. U).
- 55. The funds for Warwick's operations were predominantly derived from three sources: 1) loans on the real properties it owned; 2) sale of the Country Club Property; and 3) income from Stefanchik directly or by and through entities owned or controlled by Stefanchik and/or Fogg.
- 56. To the extent that Warwick held capital, it was, at best, minimally capitalized. According to the Debtor's Statement of Financial Affairs, it has not made any income since at least 2006. *See* SOFA Item No. 1.
- 57. Warwick has not filed any tax returns. All income, expenses, and losses from Warwick were incorporated into the personal joint tax returns of Stefanchik and Fogg.
- 58. Funds held by Warwick were often commingled with at least one other entity PSD. *See* Ex. U at 30:14-31:14.
- 59. Upon information and belief, Warwick's funds also were commingled with those of Stefanchik, Fogg, and/or other entities controlled by Stefanchik and/or Fogg.
- 60. Warwick's "business" is so intertwined with Stefanchik and Fogg that it has attempted to sell property that is not titled in Warwick's name as part of this Bankruptcy Case. Yet, Warwick claims it owns both the Warwick Island Property and the Seattle Property. *See* Amended Schedules A & D (Docket No. 40). As noted in Paragraph 49 above, Warwick, in fact, does not hold title to the Seattle Property.
- 61. Stefanchik and Fogg often moved money and assets among the various shell entities they owned, managed and/or directed. For example, Warwick received two parcels of FTC's Complaint Page 8 FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

real property from PSD, the Country Club Property and the Seattle Property, and paid no consideration for those parcels. The Quit Claim Deeds filed to record those transfers indicate that each deed reflects a "mere change in form" *See* Exhibits I & R.

- 62. When Warwick sold the Country Club Property in 2004, the proceeds of the sale were used, in part, to pay the outstanding balance for the liens held by HomeStreet and Washington Mutual on the Country Club Property. Any funds remaining after those liens were paid in full, upon information and belief, were transferred, in whole or in part, to Stefanchik, Fogg, and/or other entities owned or controlled by Stefanchik and/or Fogg.
- 63. Upon information and belief, on more than one occasion, entities or individuals other than Warwick paid for the costs, expenses, and/or taxes associated with the Country Club Property, the Mercer Island Property and the Seattle Property.
- 64. Other than the sale of the Country Club Property, Warwick has not generated income. Warwick has not charged rent to Stefanchik or Fogg for their use and occupation of the Mercer Island Property. *See* Ex. U at 15:21-23. Yet, at times, Stefanchik and/or Fogg personally tendered the monthly payments due under the HomeStreet and Washington Mutual loans secured by the Mercer Island Property.
- 65. Upon information and belief, not only did Stefanchik and/or Fogg tender the monthly payments due for the loans on the Mercer Island Property, but they also, at times, paid for various improvements and expenses associated with the maintenance, repair, and upkeep of the Mercer Island Property (collectively, with the mortgage payments on the Mercer Island Property and the Warwick Assignment, the "Unauthorized Transfers").

COUNT I

CORPORATE DISREGARD AND PIERCING

THE CORPORATE VEIL, IN REVERSE (RCW § 25.15.060)

- 66. The Commission incorporates and restates Paragraphs 1 through 65 of this Complaint, as though fully set forth in this Paragraph 66.
- 67. At all times relevant, no persons other than Fogg and/or Stefanchik held any interests in Warwick.

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- 96. The Commission contends that the entire ownership interest in Warwick and the Mercer Island Property are assets of Stefanchik which are subject to the FTC's judgment lien and claim.
- 97. Upon information and belief, Stefanchik, Fogg and Warwick contend that these assets are wholly-owned by Fogg as her separate property, and are not subject to the FTC's judgment lien and claim.
- 98. Upon information and belief, Stefanchik, Fogg and Warwick contend that any increase in value in the Mercer Island Property since it was first acquired through Warwick is wholly-owned by Fogg as her separate property, and is not subject to the FTC's judgment lien and claim.
- 99. Upon information and belief, in a document dated October 22, 2003, Stefanchik purported to effect an assignment of all rights, title and interest in PSD to his spouse, Fogg (the "PSD Assignment"; collectively, with the Warwick Assignment, the "Assignments").
- 100. After the purported Assignments, Stefanchik, in fact, directed, managed and/or controlled the operations and business of Warwick such that he is a *de facto* member or owner of Warwick.
- 101. At the time of the purported Assignments, the Commission was a creditor of Stefanchik, and the alleged Assignments do not impair the FTC's interest in Warwick and the Mercer Island Property.
- 102. The purported Assignments were not made in good faith and were made with the intent to hinder, delay or defraud creditors of Stefanchik.
- 103. Accordingly, Warwick, the entirety of the membership or ownership interests in Warwick, and Warwick's property are subject to the Commission's judgment lien, and the purported Assignments do not impair the Commission's judgment lien and claim.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the Commission respectfully requests that the Court enter an Order:

(a) piercing the corporate veil of Warwick, in reverse, and find that it is jointly and severally liable on the judgment awarded to the Commission in the Stefanchik Case;

1	(b)	declaring the Commission's lien against the Mercer Island Property valid and		
2	enforceable;			
3	(c)	avoiding the Unauthorized Transfers pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 3304 & 3306 and		
4	the FDCPA;			
5	(d)	avoiding the Unauthorized Transfers pursuant to WUFTA § 19.40.011 et seq.;		
6	(e)	ordering the return and recovery of the Unauthorized Transfers, or entering		
7	judgm	judgment against the Debtor for the value of the Unauthorized Transfers;		
8	(f)	declaring that notwithstanding the purported Warwick Assignment:		
9		(1) Stefanchik is a <i>de facto</i> member or owner of Warwick;		
10		(2) the entirety of the membersh	ip or ownership interest in Warwick and	
11	Warwick's interest in the Mercer Island Property, including any increase in value			
12	since it was first acquired through Warwick, is property of Stefanchik and/or			
13	community property of Stefanchik and Fogg, subject to the FTC's judgment lien			
14		and claim; and		
15		(3) the FTC's judgment lien and	claim are enforceable against the entirety of	
16		the membership or ownership inter	rest in Warwick, against Warwick itself, and	
17		against the Mercer Island Property	; and	
18	(g)	granting such other equitable relief	as may be just and proper.	
19	Dated: December 11, 2009 Respectfully submitted by:		Respectfully submitted by:	
20			FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION WILLARD K. TOM	
21			GENERAL COUNSEL	
22			/s/ Kimberly L. Nelson Michael P. Mora, Ill. Bar No. 6199875	
23			(admitted <i>pro hac vice</i>) Kimberly L. Nelson, VA Bar No. 47224	
24			(admitted <i>pro hac vice</i>) Federal Trade Commission	
25			600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite NJ-2122	
26			Washington, D.C. 20580 Telephone: (202) 326-3304	
27			Facsimile: (202) 326-2558 Mmora@ftc.gov	
28	Knelson@ftc.gov			
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Nadine S. Samter, WSBA No. 23881 Federal Trade Commission 915 Second Avenue, Suite 2896 Seattle, Washington 98174 Telephone: (206) 220-6350 Facsimile: (206) 220-6366 Nsamter@ftc.gov FTC's Complaint - Page 15 FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION