# FIFTH DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL
# STATE OF FLORIDA

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Case No. 5D2025-0653
LT Case No. 2020-DR-003447

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MELISSA LYNN MALONE,

Appellant,

v.

RONALD LOUIS MALONE, JR.,

Appellee.

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On appeal from the Circuit Court for Marion County.
Jennifer Lester Bass, Judge.

Christopher R. Bruce, Ashley Dillman Bruce, and Sarina M. Sabatino, of Bruce Law Firm, P.A., West Palm Beach, for Appellant.

Ronald Louis Malone, Jr., Ocala, pro se.

October 30, 2026

HARRIS, J.

Melissa Lynn Malone ("Former Wife") appeals the Final Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage entered below as well as the order denying her motion for rehearing, reconsideration and to reopen evidence. In this appeal, Former Wife raises numerous issues regarding the judgment and the proceedings below, including that the trial court failed to properly calculate certain

business liabilities in its equitable distribution scheme. This error, according to the Former Wife, has resulted in a largely skewed and unjustified unequal distribution to her detriment. To his credit, Ronald Malone ("Former Husband") has conceded error on this point and has acknowledged that this matter should be remanded to allow the trial court to correct its mathematical error to accurately represent the parties' 51% ownership of these business liabilities.

We find that it was error for the trial court to assign 100% of the business debt to Former Husband in its equitable distribution scheme when the parties own 51% of the business and the Former Husband testified that his business partner is responsible for 49% of these liabilities. We remand for correction of this error and instruct the trial court to reconsider the equitable distribution given the change in debt assignment. We find no reversible error with respect to the additional claims raised by Former Wife and therefore affirm on all remaining issues.

AFFIRMED in part; REVERSED in part; REMANDED with instructions.

EISNAUGLE, and KILBANE, JJ., concur.

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***Not final until disposition of any timely and authorized motion under Fla. R. App. P. 9.330 or 9.331.***

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