



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

LAW DEPARTMENT
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SOZI PEDRO TULANTE
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February 10, 2017

Stewart L. Cohen, Esq.
Cohen Placitella Roth, PC
2001 Market St., Suite 2900
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners
601 Commonwealth Ave., Suite 3600
P.O. Box 62535
Harrisburg, PA 17106-2535

Re: Bar Admission for Undocumented Applicants and Application of Parthiv Patel

Dear Mr. Cohen and Other Members of the Board of Law Examiners:

On behalf of the City of Philadelphia, I write in support of applications for bar admissions without consideration of the immigration status of the applicant, and urge the consideration of Mr. Patel's application without reference to his immigration status.

I strongly believe in the value of diversity within the bar and believe that admission of qualified bar applicants from all walks of life strengthens our legal community and advances the cause of justice in Pennsylvania. Immigrants in general contribute immeasurably to the economy and life of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth. Undocumented immigrants who have made it through law school, with all the financial and other challenges that doing so entails, are likely to present particularly fine examples of personal courage and perseverance that are some of the character traits most sought after in an attorney. Although undocumented immigrants should have the freedom to explore practice in any area of the law they choose, it is likely that an applicant in such a position will contribute in some way to helping provide legal services to underserved immigrant communities.

I do not know Mr. Patel personally. Based on the recommendations made by the Dean of the University of Pennsylvania School of Law, the Chancellor of the Philadelphia Bar Association, and in particular Roger Dennis, the Dean of Drexel University's Thomas R. Kline School of Law, who is personally acquainted with Mr. Patel, it appears that Mr. Patel would be an outstanding addition to the Bar and serve the Commonwealth well as a practicing attorney.

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In my view, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has full authority to make decisions on the qualifications needed to obtain admission to the Pennsylvania Bar and this Board is fully vested with the duty to make recommendations regarding consideration of undocumented immigrants for the Bar. It is also my understanding that New York State and California do not bar undocumented individuals from admission to the bars of those states.

I urge you to recommend that all undocumented bar applicants who satisfy the general qualifications for practice be admitted and that undocumented applicants not be excluded from the Bar because of their immigration status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sozi Pedro Tulante".

Sozi Pedro Tulante
City Solicitor