

February 2, 2017

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

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

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Drexel University Thomas R. Kline School of Law, I write to express my strongest support for the bar admission application of Parthiv Patel (a 2016 graduate of the School of Law), and to urge you to not exclude qualified candidates from the Pennsylvania bar based solely on their immigration status.

The Kline School of Law does not deny admission to qualified law school candidates based on their immigration status. Each candidate is assessed individually based on his or her academic background, leadership skills, and life experiences. We seek a diverse class of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, from different parts of the country and world, and from different socioeconomic backgrounds. We have found that immigrants contribute immeasurably to the diversity of our student body and the life of the school and the community.

Drexel was aware of Mr. Patel's status as a recipient of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) when he applied for admission to the School of Law. In addition to supplying the relevant paperwork, he highlighted his background as an undocumented immigrant in his personal statement. We admitted Mr. Patel to the School of Law because, in our assessment, Mr. Patel possessed the qualities necessary to thrive in our supportive and challenging learning community and to become an exemplary lawyer. In our view, Mr. Patel's experiences and worldview as an undocumented immigrant growing up in the United States enhanced, rather than undermined, his ability to contribute to the legal profession.

I have gotten to know Mr. Patel well as a student, and can attest that we were not wrong in our admission decision. Mr. Patel was a student in my Business Organizations class in his second year. He was an excellent, committed student. He was also an active, thoughtful participant who prepared carefully and was always ready to share his views. His written work was well done. He communicated effectively and showed good substantive knowledge. Mr. Patel was well spoken and well respected by his fellow students. Mr. Patel was also selected to serve in the Dean's Scholars Program where successful upper-level students provide supplemental instruction to first-year students. In Mr. Patel's case, Professor Pamela Quinn selected him to be her Dean's Scholar for Civil Procedure, given his outstanding performance in her class during his 1L year.

I am particularly impressed by the manner in which Mr. Patel exemplified our school's commitment to public service through his involvement in the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project. Mr. Patel's mentee, a high school student at the Franklin Learning Center in Philadelphia, was a member of the Kline School of Law Delegation for the Marshall-Brennan National Moot Court Competition in Washington D.C.

As the Board knows, most of our graduates sit for the Pennsylvania bar exam and ultimately practice law in Pennsylvania. I am familiar with the Pennsylvania Rules governing the admission of lawyers, and believe that Mr. Patel—and many other undocumented law school students—possess the character and fitness necessary to become outstanding members of the Pennsylvania bar.

As you know, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania possesses the inherent and exclusive power to regulate the practice of law in Pennsylvania. The power to opt out of the federal prohibition on extending law licenses to undocumented applicants thus lies with the Pennsylvania courts, rather than with the legislature. *See Matter of Application of Cesar Adrian Vargas for Admission to the Bar of the State of New York*, 131 A.D. 3d 4 (2015).

As the body charged by the Supreme Court with recommending rules for admission, I urge the Board of Law Examiners to recommend that Pennsylvania consider individually and admit to practice all undocumented bar applicants who satisfy the general qualifications for practice in Pennsylvania, rather than categorically excluding undocumented applicants based on their immigration status. If you choose to exercise your authority to make individualized determinations regarding each undocumented candidate's application, I have no doubt that you will recognize Mr. Patel's good character and fitness to practice law. I hope we will have the opportunity to join you in welcoming Mr. Patel to the Pennsylvania bar.

If you would like any further information about Mr. Patel, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger Dennis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Roger Dennis