A RESOLUTION

1 Encouraging the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and the Board of
2 Law Examiners to extend the right to practice law in this
3 Commonwealth to the entirety of the graduating class of 2019-
4 2020 if the graduate otherwise meets all criteria for fitness
5 to practice law.
6 WHEREAS, The graduates of Pennsylvania law schools' class of
7 2019-2020 have faced an unprecedented challenge in the COVID-19
8 pandemic; and
9 WHEREAS, The bar examination, which is currently required of
10 all attorneys, has been postponed twice as a result of the
11 pandemic; and
12 WHEREAS, The bar examination is now scheduled for October but
13 may be postponed again; and
14 WHEREAS, The bar examination is being offered exclusively
15 online, with more rules, unproven software, on an extremely
16 abbreviated timeline and with fewer questions yet being scored
17 the same as in prior years; and
18 WHEREAS, Students have already faced nearly a year's delay
19 and an interrupted study schedule; and
WHEREAS, These students have lost jobs or been unsuccessful in applying for jobs because of their tenuous status as new attorneys; and
WHEREAS, The delays have posed an enormous financial hardship on these students; and
WHEREAS, Asking these students to interrupt their jobs and take a leave of absence to study for another bar exam would again cause great financial hardship; and
WHEREAS, Employers are reluctant to hire attorneys under provisional licenses who may have to take extended leave to pass the bar; and
WHEREAS, Several other states have already taken action to permit this class of attorneys bar membership without passing the exam; and
WHEREAS, There is a robust regulatory system for expelling unfit attorneys; and
WHEREAS, The continuing education requirements of attorneys and on-the-job training offered by employers provides the bulk of the actual skills needed to practice law; therefore be it
RESOLVED, That the Senate encourage the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and the Board of Law Examiners to extend the right to practice law in this Commonwealth to the entirety of the graduating class of 2019-2020 if the graduate otherwise meets all criteria for fitness to practice law.