

July 14, 2003

Supreme Court of Florida
500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1927

Re: Petition to Amend Rules 2-11.1 and 4-13.2 of the Rules of the Supreme Court Relating to Admissions to the Bar
Petitioners: The Orange County Bar Association & Thomas B. Drage, Jr., Esq.
Case No: SC02-2354

Your Honors:

I am writing to support the OCBA's petition for rule change, Case Number SC02-2354.

I have been a member of the Florida Bar since 1985, and my bar number is 0503169. I feel qualified to comment on the pending petition due to the fact that my firm currently employs two Barry law school graduates, both of whom are re-enrolled at the law school, earning their second Juris Doctorate degree. It seems unfair that the burden of the law school's accreditation problems has fallen squarely on the shoulders of the students, who, of all the parties involved, have the least amount of control over the process.

The Barry graduates currently employed with my firm are competent and well-trained law clerks. They have completed the prescribed course of study and were allowed to sit for the Bar exam in February of 2001. Both of these clerks would be practicing law if not for the accreditation problems experienced by Barry. Instead, they are re-enrolled, taking the same curriculum they both successfully completed in 2000.

As I understand it, the problems at Barry developed when the ABA changed its accreditation process while Barry was undergoing its review by the ABA. Under the new rules, the House of Delegates is no longer vested with the final decision making power it enjoyed under the former rules. This change has opened the door for the possibility that a final decision could take as long as three years if the school is forced to appeal an early decision. Having an appeals process available that, if utilized, violates this Court's

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rules relating to admission to the bar, defeats the purpose of exercising the right to the appellate process.

This court should change its current rules to comport with the new ABA accreditation process. Further, this court should insure that the new rule applies retroactively to Barry's graduates and that their impounded bar scores be released.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark F. Ahlers

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished by U.S. Mail to attorney for petitioners, Mathew D. Staver, Esquire, 210 Palmetto Avenue, Longwood, Florida 32750 on this 14th day of July, 2003.

MARK F. AHLERS