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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  
and Thomas B. Drage, Jr., Esquire  
Case Number: SC02-2354

Your Honors:

My name is Sherry Davis Hires and I have been a member of the Florida Bar for over twenty years. My license number is 0353477. I am writing you today to express my support for case number SC02-2354.

My husband is one of the 109 graduates of Barry University School of Law who has been denied the opportunity to gain admission to the Florida Bar because of the ABA's change in procedures. I urge this Honorable Court to act quickly to conform its rules to comply with the reality of the ABA's new, lengthy, accreditation process and I urge the Court to ensure that the aforementioned graduates are afforded relief in the process so that they may have the opportunity to become members of our Bar at the earliest opportunity.

I can not begin to describe to you the toll this situation has taken on our family and our family's finances. Becoming a lawyer is a life-long dream for my husband. He is black----one of those minority persons that the Bar seems so anguished not to have in sufficient amount. He has a desire to assist minority members of our city---the city where he was born and where he was reared. Because of our family situation, we were not in a position for him to leave his job and move to the location of one of the other law schools in Florida. When this law school established itself here in Orlando and offered the opportunity for students to attend part-time and on weekends, it seemed that he would be able to fulfill his dream. We looked at the work that was being done on the physical facilities and the quality of the credentials of the faculty and concluded that the school was proceeding diligently toward accreditation. We felt that the school had an excellent chance of achieving accreditation in the appropriate time frame.

My husband was a member of the initial class and began in the fall of 1995. He worked a full

time job and attended class in the evenings and on Saturdays. He missed family events. He missed our daughter's kindergarten Christmas pageant (her first speaking role!) because of a final exam. He sacrificed because he wanted to make a better life for our family. We *all* sacrificed.

I am writing this information to show this Honorable Court that there are real people and real communities that have been harmed immeasurably because of the changes in these procedures. If one of the other law schools, Florida State, Stetson, or University of Florida were to lose accreditation under the ABA's new rules, it seems that it would be impossible for the school to proceed under the new rules and regain the accreditation within the current time frame. Hundreds of students would be in the same plight as the Barry graduates. Surely this is not the reputation that we want for our schools---that one could attend and still be denied access to the Bar because of the interaction between our Bar's rules of admission and the ABA's rules for accreditation. Worse still, in my humble opinion, is the inequitable situation we have at hand:

Barry graduate #1:

86 "unaccredited" hours + 4 "accredited" hours = "qualified to be a Bar member."

vs.

Barry graduate #2:

90 "unaccredited" hours + 30 "accredited" hours = "not worthy to be a Bar member."

I urge this Honorable Court to quickly conform its rules to the reality of the ABA's new process. I urge this Honorable Court to make certain that the Barry graduates that are caught up in the conflict of these rules be afforded full relief in the form of release of their bar examination scores and, where appropriate, admission to the Florida Bar.

Thank you for your consideration,

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Davis Hires

*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 \_\_\_\_ day of July, 2003.

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Sherry Davis Hires