

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 367 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY FARNESE, TARTAGLIONE, PHILLIPS-HILL, MUTH AND
SCAVELLO, SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

REFERRED TO JUDICIARY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

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

1 WHEREAS, These students have lost jobs or been unsuccessful
2 in applying for jobs because of their tenuous status as new
3 attorneys; and

4 WHEREAS, The delays have posed an enormous financial hardship
5 on these students; and

6 WHEREAS, Asking these students to interrupt their jobs and
7 take a leave of absence to study for another bar exam would
8 again cause great financial hardship; and

9 WHEREAS, Employers are reluctant to hire attorneys under
10 provisional licenses who may have to take extended leave to pass
11 the bar; and

12 WHEREAS, Several other states have already taken action to
13 permit this class of attorneys bar membership without passing
14 the exam; and

15 WHEREAS, There is a robust regulatory system for expelling
16 unfit attorneys; and

17 WHEREAS, The continuing education requirements of attorneys
18 and on-the-job training offered by employers provides the bulk
19 of the actual skills needed to practice law; therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That the Senate encourage the Supreme Court of
21 Pennsylvania and the Board of Law Examiners to extend the right
22 to practice law in this Commonwealth to the entirety of the
23 graduating class of 2019-2020 if the graduate otherwise meets
24 all criteria for fitness to practice law.