We ask the Council to act with restraint in light of the serious concerns that led so many groups and members of the ABA House of Delegates to once again reject the Council’s proposed changes to Standard 316 relating to bar passage.

This could be a moment of fruitful collaboration. We ask the Council to initiate a new consideration of Standard 316 involving stakeholders in a thorough, transparent, and inclusive discussion of the goals of and implementation concerns about Standard 316, accompanied by
serious study of the Council’s proposal and possible alternatives.

As you know, the significant concerns expressed in the House of Delegates include:

- the potential impact on the diversity of our profession;
- the lack of study or evidence of what language in Standard 316 (two or three or four years for compliance, for example) would minimize the negative impact on diversity;
- the basic flaw of a Standard that takes no account of wide disparities in degree of difficulty of bar exams from state-to-state, of the impact on states with very few law graduates, or of problems from accepted students transferring to higher ranked schools after a successful 1L year, for example;
- the need for more targeted strategies to address the problems of consumer protection and law school debt;
- the harm to the public of pushing law students to train even more for the current exams instead of preparing for the wider competencies required for practice of law;
- the bad timing of attempting this change now during a largely unexplained generational downturn in bar passage; and
- the bad timing of attempting this change now when serious study may be putting licensing tests on the cusp of significant change.

The overwhelming negative vote of the House of Delegates and strong opposition of so many sections and colleagues indicate that more work and dialogue are needed before action is taken. We implore the Council to act with restraint and care.

Thank you for your attentiveness to these important issues. Please feel free to contact Matthew Archer-Beck at archerbeckm@sec.gov on behalf of the ABA Goal III entities, Lacy Durham at lacydurhamlaw@yahoo.com for the ABA Young Lawyers Division, Professor Kendall Kerew at kkerew@gsu.edu for the Clinical Legal Education Association (CLEA), Chancellor John Pierre at Jpierre@sulc.edu for the HBCU Law Deans, Professor Denise Roy at denise.roy@mitchellhamline.edu for the Society of American Law Teachers (SALT), or Neegen Sadeghi-Movahed at neegen.sadeghi@student.american.edu for the ABA Law Students Division with any questions or responses.

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