Date: March 16, 2016

TO: Standing Committee on Ethics & Professional Responsibility

FROM: Mathew Mecoli on behalf of the ABA Law Student Division

Dear Chairperson and Committee Members:

Please accept the following speech, delivered at the Public Hearing on February 7, 2016, on behalf of myself personally and as a representative of the Law Student Division. A record of this speech can be found on pages 68-69 of the transcript of that meeting.

Statement of Mathew C. Mecoli, 3rd Circuit Governor, on behalf of the Law Student Division:

Mr. Chair, the Law Student Division would like to be recognized.

Hello, I'm Matt Mecoli, I'm the 3rd Circuit Governor of the Law Student Division Board of Governors, and I speak on their behalf.

The Law Student Division Board lent its full support this morning to the Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity's written comments and mem in a unanimous vote in what we called "a no brainer." It took our Board only minutes, having reviewed the memo, to give our support. I will keep my comments similarly brief.

We, the future members of this profession, were, frankly, surprised to discover that an anti-discrimination provision was not already in the black letter of our rules. There is no doubt in our minds that discrimination on any basis is inherently unethical and should be treated as such. Nor did we find it appropriate to hold ourselves to a higher "knowing" standard of proof different from that of federal and state civil rights laws, our own judicial rules, or the rules of other professions. If anything, we, as a profession, should hold ourselves to the highest levels of ethical conduct, and our rules should demonstrate that commitment. We, the Law Student Division, happily agree to abide by these high ethical standards when we enter the profession.

Sincerely,

Mathew C. Mecoli

ABA Law Student Division,
Immediate Past 3rd Circuit Governor

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