

Sheldon Sloan
President
The State Bar of California
180 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. Sloan:

As members of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, we write to you today to support the proposed use of California bar data that is before the Committee of Bar Examiners. The Commission is an independent, bipartisan agency that studies and collects information relating to discrimination or a denial of equal protection of the laws under the Constitution because of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin, or in the administration of justice.

We believe that it is of the utmost importance that we get better data to understand issues relating to the impact of racial admissions preferences on minority law students. Analyses of the detailed data in the California archives is, we believe, a critical and perhaps unique opportunity to resolve this very important issue.

We understand that a team of researchers composed of Professor Sander, Dr. Steven Klein, Dr. E. Douglass Williams and Professor Bill Henderson has developed a proposal to analyze the California bar data. We believe that it is important to encourage research on this data in order to better understand the extent to which the use of racial preferences is either helpful or harmful to minority students.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights conducted a briefing on Sander's research this past June, and we believe that more research is necessary at this point. We believe that it is important to encourage research on this data in order to better understand the important questions raised by Dr. Sander's research. Detailed data in the public archives has an invaluable role to play in advancing knowledge and reform in this area. Accordingly, we urge you to make the data available to researchers in order to advance the state of public knowledge on this issue.

Sincerely yours,

GERALD A. REYNOLDS
Chairman

ABIGAIL N. THERNSTROM
Vice Chair

JENNIFER C. BRACERAS
Commissioner

PETER N. KIRSANOW
Commissioner

ASHLEY L. TAYLOR, JR.
Commissioner