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Senator Rick Jones, Chairman
Michigan Senate Judiciary Committee
P.O. Box 30036
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Testimony in support of SB 742

My name is DeShea Morrow, and my family and I have resided in Menominee, Michigan for the past 11 years. I am also an attorney licensed to practice law in both Wisconsin and California by virtue of passing the bar examination in both states. I earned my law degree through Oak Brook College of Law and Government Policy of Fresno, California. Since Oak Brook College of Law is not approved by the American Bar Association, (ABA), I am not allowed to sit for the Michigan Bar Examination. I am asking you to support SB 742.

I have practiced law for 12 years, mostly in the area of criminal law. I worked for two years in a two-lawyer office doing mostly criminal defense work as well as some civil practice. I was then hired by the Wisconsin Office of the State Public Defender as a staff attorney in their Peshtigo, Wisconsin Office. I was in this position for almost 4 years until I was hired as an Assistant District Attorney for Marinette County, Wisconsin, which is a contiguous county to Menominee County, Michigan. I have been with the Marinette County District Attorney's Office for almost 6 years. I handle a variety of cases ranging from traffic offenses to homicides. I also serve as the prosecution representative on the Marinette County Treatment Drug Court multi-disciplinary team.

I believe that my practice experience as well as the fact that I have passed the bar examination in two states (California being widely-known as one of the most difficult in the United States), more than qualifies me to at least sit for the Michigan Bar Examination. I also believe that I should be allowed to be directly admitted to the Michigan Bar without taking the bar exam based upon my 12 years of law practice, nearly half of which has been in the position of Marinette County Assistant District Attorney

I agree that candidates for bar admission should meet certain standards of legal competence; however, I do not think that ABA approval is the only benchmark by which legal competence is judged. I urge you to support SB 742. Thank you for your consideration.