

# CALIFORNIA LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

Alan Steinbrecher, Chair  
Donna HersHKovitz, Interim Executive Director  
State Bar of California  
180 Howard St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

***Via electronic mail***

Dear Alan and Donna:

We note with interest the agenda item for closed session on the April 14, Board of Trustees of the State Bar of California agenda labeled “Consideration of Options for Preparation and Administration of the June 2020 First-Year Law Students' Examination and July 2020 California Bar Exam.”

As the statewide, voluntary bar association for all California attorneys, including students, newly admitted professionals and those awaiting admission, we write to strongly encourage you to quickly decide whether you are proceeding with the July bar exam and to communicate that decision as expeditiously as possible to law students, law schools and the legal community at large. Scientists and medical professionals cannot agree on a specific date by which ending social distancing may be safe and prudent. Conventional wisdom suggests that the status quo is likely to continue into the summer. It seems unlikely, therefore, that a July administration of the bar exam will be safe and practical. In light of those circumstances, graduating law students deserve the small amount of certainty that a quick and definitive answer about the July exam would provide.

Given that many law students will be graduating with huge sums of student loan debt into an uncertain economy and job market, if there is no July exam, we urge you to reschedule the exam for the early fall. We understand that the National Conference of Bar Examiners has offered two alternate fall dates—Sept. 9 and 10, and a Sept. 30 and Oct. 1—for those states that cancel the July administration of their bar exams. In the event that circumstances are such that California cannot offer an exam in the fall, we encourage you and the Supreme Court to explore other options to facilitate the prompt entry into practice of 2020 law school graduates.

Sincerely,

Ona Alston Dosunmu  
C.E.O. & Executive Director

Emilio Varanini  
President

