RESOLUTIONS OF THE
HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA
("HBAPA")

Adopted by the Board of Directors
at a duly held meeting on
September 16, 2020

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ADDITIONAL FISCAL YEAR 2021 FUNDING FOR THE BOARD OF PARDONS TO HIRE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE BACKLOG IN THE PROCESSING OF PARDON APPLICATIONS AND <u>RECOMMENDATIONS OF CLEMENCY</u>

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides that only those who have been recommended by a majority of the Pennsylvania Board of Pardons ("BOP") may be granted a pardon by the Governor;[1]

WHEREAS, as a result of many important changes that the BOP has made in the application form and process, the number of applications has tripled, and there is now a backlog of over 1,000 applications awaiting administrative processing;

WHEREAS, due to lack of adequate staff, the BOP currently takes approximately eight months to review, correct, accept and file an application, and, at the other end of the process, it is taking an average of over nine months from the date that the BOP votes to recommend a candidate to prepare the required paperwork and await the Governor's decision;

WHEREAS, the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia has issued a report finding that pardons allowed recipients to earn an estimated $16 million in wages over the ten years that the issue was studied (2008-2018), that it was taking an average of three years from filing to action by the Governor, and that decreasing the processing time by just 25% would have allowed recipients to earn an additional $6.9 million over the ten year period of the study;[2]

WHEREAS, the Auditor General of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has similarly called for expanding the number of pardons granted and decreasing the processing time;[3] and

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[1] Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Article IV, Section 9(a).
[2] ECONOMY LEAGUE, PARDONS AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: EVALUATING A DECADE OF DATA IN PENNSYLVANIA (Apr. 2020), http://economyleague.org/uploads/files/518454652334570386-impactofpardons-final.pdf, at 24; 11; 34.
[3] EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE, CRIMINAL JUSTICE: REFORMS TO IMPROVE LIVES AND SAVE MONEY, AUDITOR GENERAL REPORT 20 (May 2020), https://www.paauditor.gov/Media/Default/Reports/RPT_CJR_060920_FINAL.pdf.

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the HBAPA (the "Board") has reviewed the above-mentioned statistics, studies and facts, and finds that it is in the best interests of, and comports with the missions and goals of, the HBAPA to support efforts aimed at overhauling the pardons system in Pennsylvania.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that, the Board calls for an acceleration of the consideration of applications for pardon filed by non-incarcerated residents of Pennsylvania, and urges the General Assembly promptly to provide whatever funds are necessary to ensure that as many applications as possible are reviewed and filed within thirty days of receipt by the BOP, that as many hearings as possible be held within one year of filing, and that all recommendations for pardon made by the BOP be delivered to the Governor within thirty days of the date of the votes thereon; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that, the Board authorizes the president, vice presidents or any other officer of the HBAPA, or any other person so designated by the president (such persons, the "Authorized Persons"), to communicate the content of this resolution, along with such other information that such Authorized Person deems appropriate and necessary to effectuate the crux of the foregoing resolutions, to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General, the General Assembly, state and local public officials, other bar associations, chambers of commerce and trade associations and the public at large, and to take such other action as deemed to be appropriate by such Authorized Person.