



# PACDL

Pennsylvania Association of  
Criminal Defense Lawyers

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Senator Stewart Greenleaf  
Senate Box 203012  
Room: 19 East Wing  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3012

Dear Senator Greenleaf:

I write you as President of The Pennsylvania Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (PACDL). PACDL is the only statewide organization for all attorneys – Public Defenders, private court-appointed counsel and private retained counsel – who represent persons accused and convicted of criminal offenses.

For years, you have fought to ensure justice and fairness in this Commonwealth. Your sponsorship of proposed Senate Bill 979 is another example of your effort for which our membership is thankful. While PACDL supports this Bill, we must do so with a critical caveat.

Although S.B. 979 does not address all deficiencies in the current indigent defense system in the Commonwealth, Senate Bill 979 is a necessary first step. It is essential that any legislation establishing funding for training ensure that no county may reduce or eliminate funds it provides for training of public defender and indigent defendant court-appointed counsel. The training funded through S.B. 979 must supplement the training already funded by the Counties. Unfortunately, even if county public defender funding is not reduced, S.B. 979 is not a sufficient commitment by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to provide equitable and adequate indigent criminal defense representation.

PACDL has strongly endorsed the ABA Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System. Unfortunately, even after S.B. 979, the indigent defense system in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will remain inadequate and in contravention of the ABA Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System.

PACDL has long worked for the provision of effective assistance of counsel in its fullest sense – for lawyers who are not only well-trained but well-resourced and with reasonable caseloads. PACDL's efforts include providing comprehensive and high-quality continuing legal education programs, input to the legislative and rule-making processes, and public education. PACDL supports



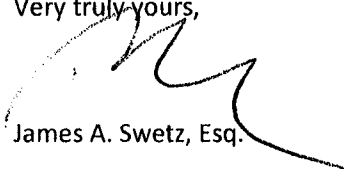
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statewide funding for indigent criminal defense, in particular for proper staffing and compensation, for necessary resources such as investigative and expert services, and for training.

In an effort to further the foregoing goal, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss S.B. 979 and the reforms we believe are necessary in Pennsylvania to ensure that indigent defense services and resources comply with the ABA Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System.

Very truly yours,

  
James A. Swetz, Esq.

cc: Ellen Greenlee  
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