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July 19, 2000

\*ALSO ADMITTED IN TEXAS

Ms. Helen Edgington, Chair  
Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board  
c/o Louis Unglesby  
246 Napoleon Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Re: Larry S. Bankston

Dear Ms. Edgington:

I am contacting you on behalf of Larry S. Bankston concerning the Disciplinary Hearing which will be conducted later this month to determine his status as an attorney. I have been a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association since 1983 and have known Mr. Bankston professionally and personally for over a decade. Despite his criminal conviction, I do not feel that Mr. Bankston should lose his license to practice law. I understand that he has had no prior disciplinary issues with the State Bar Association and know that he is well thought of in the legal community. The circumstances that led to the suspension of his license did not involve any legal matters or the loss of funds by any clients.

I have served as a hearing officer on behalf of the Louisiana State Bar Association in a matter involving a fee dispute. In the case, the attorney failed to segregate a legal retainer he had received from a client. Subsequently, the attorney withdrew from the case without his client's permission or knowledge, but refused to refund the unused portion of the retainer. Despite the numerous ethical issues raised by his conduct, the attorney was not the least bit contrite during the proceedings. However, he faced relatively minor consequences from the arbitration proceeding.

Although I am not trying to minimize the seriousness of a federal conviction, the fee dispute, in my opinion, involved a more direct breach of ethical duties to a client. Mr. Bankston did not breach duties pursuant to an attorney-client relationship and the adverse impact of his conduct on the profession was more indirect. Mr. Bankston received a 31 month sentence, which he duly served. During the trial and afterwards, Mr. Bankston and his family conducted themselves with dignity. He has paid the price for his criminal conviction and I don't think he should be punished any further by being denied his right to practice law. Consequently, I would urge that the Disciplinary Board consider the suspension of his license a more fitting penalty

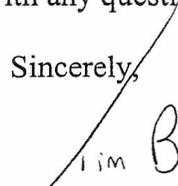
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under the circumstances. At the suitable time, I would also urge that the Board consider reinstating Mr. Bankston to the practice of law.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Burns". The signature is written in a cursive style, with "Tim" in a smaller font and "Burns" in a larger, more prominent font. A diagonal line is drawn through the signature from the top left to the bottom right.  
Tim Burns  
Timothy G. Burns

TGB/cf