

**Statement from State Bar of California President Jeffrey L. Bleich  
San Francisco, CA**

Today, thousands of Pakistani attorneys sit in jails with no courts to which they can appeal for justice. These lawyers suffered beatings and incarceration not because they violated their nation's law, but because they respected those laws in the face of threats and attacks. Like lawyers around the world, they understand that the rule of law exists only if citizens respect the law even when it is inconvenient, and even when it comes at great personal cost. The lawyers of Pakistan are an example to us all of selfless devotion to the common good. They have faced physical violence, incarceration, and persecution to restore law to their country. The State Bar of California, as a public agency, cannot take positions on matters unrelated to the practice of law in California, and so I do not speak for our Association. But the fact that there are limits on the statements or purpose of our Bar Association, has not limited the statements or purpose of our members -- the lawyers of this California. Over the past few days, lawyers throughout California have stood up to join in protests in support of the lawyers of Pakistan. As President of the State Bar of California, I stand with these thousands of lawyers throughout California and throughout this nation -- who have paused their own busy lives -- to ensure that all people live under the rule of law. I am proud to support the lawyers of Pakistan in their struggle to re-open that nation's courts and I join lawyers everywhere in condemning the punishment of attorneys for seeking to promote equal treatment under law for us all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff Bleich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffrey L. Bleich  
President  
State Bar of California