

June 3, 2013

LGBT Bar Association
1301 K Street, NW
Suite 1100 East Tower
Washington, DC 20005

Statement of Support for Aaron M. Tidman

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to nominate Aaron M. Tidman for a 2013 Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 Award. I have gotten to know Aaron since he joined Mintz Levin almost five months ago, I have read the compelling letters of support from Aaron's friends, colleagues, and clients, and I believe that Aaron would be a deserving and honorable recipient of this award.

Achievements Within The Nominee's Legal Field

Since graduating from law school, Aaron has relentlessly dedicated himself to his clients and his profession with integrity and zeal. Aaron's practice area is focused on white-collar defense, and in particular, internal investigations and compliance reviews under the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA). Aaron also handles a variety of government enforcement matters, including securities fraud enforcement, and securities litigation.

Over the course of his career, Aaron has earned a reputation as a tenacious, thoughtful, creative, and kind lawyer. He has been involved many significant matters while an associate at Debevoise & Plimpton and Mintz Levin, always working hard to achieve a just outcome for his clients. For example, shortly after joining Debevoise, while still a junior associate, Aaron became a key member of a worldwide team investigating potential FCPA violations at Siemens AG. Aaron conducted witness interviews in Germany, Russia, and England; drafted factual memoranda to U.S. government agencies; and prepared presentations to the government and World Bank. The investigation ultimately concluded with an early settlement that pleased both the client and the government.

Aaron also had a leadership role in defending against several securities fraud class actions, all of which resulted in dismissal of the claims against his clients. In one case, Aaron was the only associate assigned to the matter, and he was solely responsible for researching and drafting the motion to dismiss and reply brief. The lead partner on the case trusted Aaron's judgment and people skills enough to allow him to take the lead during an interview of the client and serve as the primary point of contact for the client going forward. Needless to say, the client was extremely happy with the court's decision to dismiss the claims against him. Aaron achieved similar results in other securities litigation, as well as SEC and DOJ insider trading and Arms Export Control Act investigations.

Beyond these successes, Aaron has spent hundreds of hours dedicated to pro bono matters, including representation of four Guantanamo Bay detainees during their *habeas* appeals. In recognition of his dedication to pro bono causes, the DC Court of Appeals and DC Superior Court appointed Aaron to the Capitol Pro Bono High Honor Roll in 2011. This award is bestowed upon DC attorneys who spend more than 100 hours on pro bono matters in a year.

Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.

BOSTON | LONDON | LOS ANGELES | NEW YORK | SAN DIEGO | SAN FRANCISCO | STAMFORD | WASHINGTON

June 3, 2013

Commitment to LGBT Equality

Aaron did not come out of the closet until he was 24 years old – the same year, not coincidentally, that he sought to get a fresh start and attend law school. Moving from the diverse, metropolitan Washington, DC region to the more rural and conservative upstate New York region to attend law school, Aaron witnessed and experienced first-hand the struggle, pain, and nominalization of LGBT people outside of major cities. Aaron has been committed to LGBT equality ever since.

The experience of starting over in a new academic environment, in a new town, opened up doors on a number of personal and professional fronts. On a personal level, Aaron met his partner, Christopher Westcott, during his second week of law school, and they still enjoy a loving, committed relationship almost nine years later. On a professional level, Aaron began exploring LGBT rights through Prof. Casey Sprock's "Sexual Orientation and the Law" class, which inspired him to fight for LGBT rights in every aspect of his life. Aaron committed himself to the academic study of LGBT rights, receiving the highest grade in Prof. Sprock's class and remaining friends with Prof. Sprock thereafter. Aaron also recruited Prof. Andrew Koppelman, a preeminent LGBT legal scholar, to write an article for the *Syracuse Law Review*, and he joined the law school's gay-straight alliance.

After joining Debevoise & Plimpton as a first-year associate, Aaron brought his passion and fight for LGBT equality with him from upstate New York. Aaron quickly joined Debevoise's LGBT advocacy group and Diversity Committee, helping to change Debevoise's tax "gross-up" policy applying to same-sex partnerships that receive health benefits, and he dedicated himself to a variety of pro bono matters outside of his regular billable work. Aaron spent three years working closely with Lambda Legal on several matters, including researching and advising on ways the Obama administration could improve federal support for LGBT youth in state-run foster care programs. Upon joining Mintz Levin, Aaron actively sought to engage Lambda Legal as a new pro bono client for the firm and continue his important work.

In addition to his professional dedication to LGBT equality, Aaron has spent a significant amount of time fundraising for LGBT causes in his spare time. Prior to joining the 2012 Obama campaign full-time, Aaron volunteered as a fundraiser for several campaign subgroups, including LGBT for Obama and Lawyers for Obama. Aaron spearheaded the organization of one fundraiser, in particular, that intersected both subgroups – an event featuring Paul Smith, an openly gay U.S. Supreme Court appellate lawyer who argued *Lawrence v. Texas* before the Court, among many other cases. Aaron worked closely with the Obama campaign's LGBT Leadership Council to both fundraise and influence the Obama administration's policy toward the LGBT community. Aaron also has raised money for other LGBT causes, including Scouts for America, a group dedicated to ending the Boy Scouts' LGBT membership ban; the Victory Fund; and Heather Mizeur's candidacy in Maryland's gubernatorial race. Heather would be the first LGBT governor and the first woman governor in Maryland's history.

Outside of his professional and political life, Aaron also has dedicated his time and advocated for LGBT equality in other forums. For example, Aaron served as a volunteer during the 2012 Lavender Law Conference in Washington, DC, and he was invited to speak on a panel at Harvard Law School called "Defending LGBT Rights in Socially Conservative States."

Aaron Tidman is committed to LGBT equality in both his personal and professional lives, and I enthusiastically nominate him as a 2013 Best LGBT Lawyer Under 40. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide additional information as needed.

Sincerely,
John B. Koss