

16 September 2013

To the Sentencing Judge
Melbourne County Court

Your Honour,

I have learned that Gary Smith has been charged with "Obtain Financial Advantage by Deception" and I voluntarily provide a character reference on his behalf. I have been his friend for 13 years and I know him to be a good man who is distressed by his current circumstances.

Gary called me when he was arrested for the charge and he has had my support ever since he admitted his error and continually showed remorse for the offending. He completely regrets the offence he has committed and is intent on taking responsibility for his actions. I understand that he has already met with his employer, from whom he obtained a financial advantage by deception, to discuss the terms by which he could pay back the amount he owes and to personally convey his sincerest apologies.

Gary is a good man and this has been obvious to me for the past 13 years. He has tremendously helped my wife and I get through our marital problems which was almost headed for a divorce which would have left our three children with a broken family. He is a very responsible son, brother, and father. Despite having a family of his own (a wife and a daughter), he continues to support his parents and his two younger sisters in every possible way he can. This is extraordinary considering that his only daughter suffered from a kidney failure that required weekly hemodialysis for almost a year.

This offence is Gary's first criminal charge. He has always been an outstanding citizen who takes part in medical missions and who has repeatedly served in the past as a medical consultant for non-profit health organisations. As a physician, he has helped numerous people recover from various kinds of illnesses, not just by closely following standard medical procedures but by personally getting to know his patients and their families so he could learn of the best ways an individual patient can get well.

Gary's daughter had a kidney transplant about two months ago. Although it is a great relief to Gary and his family that their daughter is finally in a better condition, I am aware of the staggering debts that Gary has accumulated due to his daughter's medical expenses. This has clearly been causing him great anxiety and is surely the primary cause of him committing the offence.

I understand the distressing circumstances that Gary faces. He has expressed his deepest regrets about the offending to me, particularly its grave repercussions for his family and his career. I am confident that he will not re-offend and will continue to be a valuable member of the society. I wish for him the best outcome for this case and I shall support him as all his families and friends do.

If necessary, I am willing to give oral evidence to the court for Gary. You may contact me on (03) 4321-4321.

Sincerely,

Joseph Sebastian

