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July 14, 2017

Judge Paul deFonzo
Immigration Court
1000 Second Ave, Suite 2500
Seattle, Washington 98104

Your Honor,

I am writing to urge that you cancel any deportation order for decorated U.S. Army veteran Zahid Chaudhry. I have known Mr. Chaudhry for the past ten years, as we both worked together for the health and well-being of returning Iraq War veterans at the Coffee Strong resource center next to Joint Base Lewis-McChord. He impressed me as a veteran who was disabled while in service to the country, and who has dedicated his life to the military community. I vividly remember being utterly shocked that he had not yet been granted U.S. citizenship, given his honorable Qualified Military service that qualified him for expedited citizenship, and his marriage to a U.S. citizen.

Zahid has always expressed quintessential American values of fairness, tolerance for diverse viewpoints, and civic engagement. As a Jew whose family was devastated in the Holocaust, Zahid's dedication to building bridges between religious communities has helped reaffirm my faith in humanity. He has always fought for the rights of other people, particularly fellow veterans, and now it is our turn to fight for his rights. He should not be denied citizenship based on a legal technicality, or on his beliefs or faith. His case is a litmus test for America's fairness, and the rest of the country and perhaps the world will be watching your decision.

Sincerely,

Dr. Zoltán Grossman
Professor of Geography
The Evergreen State College