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A Note

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A NOTE

*Robert T. Pelinka Jr.**

I find it quite meaningful that heartwarming reflections about Douglas Kahn come very naturally to me. Perhaps that, in and of itself, says something about this incredible man. For context, my time in physical proximity to Professor Kahn came during my years as a student-athlete at the University of Michigan, where I graduated from the Ross School of Business, and the Law School. I was also a member of The Michigan Wolverines Basketball Team, where I participated in three NCAA Final Fours, and earned an NCAA Championship Title. I mention these things, not to tout my own accomplishments, but rather because I firmly believe that none of these blessings would have occurred but for my relationship with Professor Kahn. He was a true lighthouse for me in the seas of youth and academic discovery. What I think is most remarkable about all of this is that at the core of Professor Kahn is a life that has, not himself, but others at the center. Doug Kahn's passion, lived out, was simply this – how can I make the lives of those around me better? I experienced all of this first hand, and his amazing convictions and corresponding actions had a powerful and indelible impact on me. First, I encountered this when Doug served as my student-athlete mentor. The hours and hours he invested in helping me learn the disciplines of becoming a true student, and critical thinker, were life shaping. Next, I received the gift of being Professor Kahn's friend. Doug and his lovely late wife Mary would graciously host me at their home for masterpiece culinary meals, ping-pong matches, and late night discussions on literature, art, and history. (These times eventually birthed a post-graduate trip with the Kahns to Europe, which was one of the greatest travel experiences of my life.) And, finally, I received the benefits of being a student in Professor Kahn's class, where sound tax thoughts, a commitment to the academic rigors of disciplined hard work, and focus, and a thoughtful analysis of the law all came into being. Through all of these prisms, the mark that Professor Kahn left on my life was indelible. In fact, I have a picture of Professor Kahn on my desk at home, which is a fitting metaphor to the life-shaping role he has played in my life. Professor Kahn sits in the stands of one of my Wolverine basketball games, beaming with pride wearing his maize and blue Wolverine rugby shirt. His cheeks are rosy with joy. His eyes filled with the spark of life. He watches me play in robust support, and he applauds with un-

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matched enthusiasm. In that moment, I quietly know that his heart desires my best. This is the essence of Doug Kahn. A life given to others. Because of that, on this day of his retirement from the great profession of teaching, my soul goes to him with extreme gratitude, appreciation and love. All that Professor Kahn has given, this world has forever received.