



SKAMANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Skamania County Courthouse
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April 29, 2008

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CLERK
RONALD R. CARPENTER
08 MAY - 1 AM 7:56
STATE OF WASHINGTON
JIM RICHARDSON

Clerk of the Supreme Court
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Camilla.Faulk@courts.wa.gov

Re: Proposed CrR 3.1, CrRLJ 3.1, CrR 4.1, CrRLJ 4.1, CrR 4.2, CrRLJ 4.2

Dear Ms. Faulk,

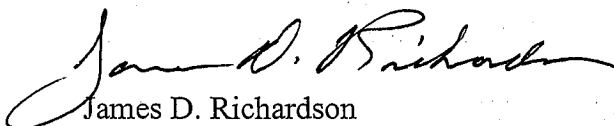
Please accept this transmission as the Skamania County Board of County Commissioners comments on the proposed court rules listed above. Our concern is primarily with the CrRLJ rules that place new requirements on staffing for both the prosecutor and defense offices.

By requiring that a defense attorney be at arraignment to advise defendants as to whether or not they should enter a plea, the cost of public defense is dramatically increased. The legislature has not increased the funding for public defense to meet this need. The increase in costs would require that other mandated services be reduced or eliminated. All this without any showing that the change is of any benefit to defendants in District or Municipal courts.

We are opposed to the state bar association being allowed to set standards for the delivery of defense by the County. This issue is already addressed by RCW 10.101.030. Decreasing the case load only increases the cost to the County, again with no showing of how the state bar justified its "case load" numbers.

Skamania County currently funds three full time public defender salaries and two deputy prosecutors. The addition of at least two full time positions is beyond our counties financial capabilities. The imposition of this expense by Court Rule has questionable constitutional support. We ask the Supreme Court to not accept the rules as proposed.

Very truly yours,


James D. Richardson
Chair