



WASHINGTON  
COURTS

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April 24, 2008

Justice Charles Johnson  
Washington Supreme Court, Temple of Justice  
PO Box 40929  
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Re: Proposed Changes to CrR 4.1 (arraignments) and CrR 4.2 (pleas)

Dear Justice Johnson:

The Superior Court Judges' Association (SCJA) opposes the proposed changes to CrR 4.1 (arraignments) and CrR 4.2 (pleas) published for comment by the Supreme Court.

The proposed changes to CrR 4.1 subsections (c) and (d) would make it much more difficult to conduct an arraignment for a defendant who is not represented. It would allow an arraignment to be prolonged unnecessarily.

It is difficult to see the genesis for this rule amendment recommendation. While arraignment issues *may* exist in Superior Courts in our state, it does not seem to be a widespread problem in need of a "one size fits all" solution as proposed in this rule amendment.

Further, we disagree with the change in CrR 4.1 subsection (f) of the recommendation requiring the prosecutor read the information at arraignment. Since there is no provision for the prosecutor to waive the formal reading, this would be a waste of scarce court time on arraignment calendars.

The proposed change to CrR 4.2 subsection (d) adds language that judges should not accept a *pro se* guilty plea unless a valid waiver is made on the record. This language seems to be stating the obvious and not necessary.

Thank you for your consideration of the SCJA's comments on these proposed rule changes.

Very truly yours,

Vickie I. Churchill  
President-Judge  
Superior Court Judges' Association

cc: SCJA Board of Trustees  
Judge Salvatore Cozza  
Camillia Falk  
Regina McDougall