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Supreme Court Rules Committee
Temple of Justice
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504

SUBJECT: Comments on Proposed GR 34

Honorable Members of the Court:

I am writing to support adoption by the Court of proposed General Rule 34: Waiver of Court and Clerk's Fees and Charges in Civil Matters on the Basis of Indigency.

Skagit County, where I live and practice, is dependent upon volunteer lawyers to provide legal services for those who are unable to afford them. Unfortunately, those lawyers who provide legal services for indigent clients must too frequently also spend time drafting and filing *In Forma Pauperis* petitions. In nearly all of these instances, the petitions are granted. In other words, the burden placed on lawyers who volunteer their time meeting the needs of Washington's impoverished citizens is increased for no good reason.

As an attorney who only accepts municipal governments as clients (primarily cities and towns), let me assure you that I well understand the challenging economic issues facing all local governments. Simply stated, the cost of services demanded by my client's constituents keeps going up, while the means to pay for those same services that are available to local governments has diminished. The provision of public services, however, is an issue that must be thoughtfully addressed by each and every citizen, as well as elected officials. The ransoming of services such as courthouse domestic violence facilitators against the practical ability of indigent citizens to access the courthouse is the type of ad hoc decision-making that is wholly unreasonable, entirely unjustified, and absolutely disingenuous.

CLERK

RECEIVED
SUPREME COURT
STATE OF WASHINGTON
08 APR 11 AM 7:50
JY RONALD R. CARPENTER

The proposed rule is reasonable, necessary, and in the best interests of justice. I urge its adoption.

Yours very truly,

LAW OFFICES OF SCOTT G. THOMAS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S.G. Thomas", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott G. Thomas, Esq.