



Northwest Justice Project

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César E. Torres
Executive Director

June 18, 2010

Justice Charles Johnson, Chair Rules Committee
Supreme Court of Washington
Temple of Justice
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Re: Supplemental Comment on Language Revision to Proposed GR 34

Dear Justice Johnson:

I write on behalf of the Northwest Justice Project, the largest provider of free civil legal services to Washington's low-income population and their communities. We serve over 20,000 individuals who have civil legal needs each year. The vast majority of those involved in civil judicial proceedings are unrepresented. These individuals often face immediate financial and other barriers at the proverbial courthouse door - barriers that GR 34 is intended to address. Examples of some of these barriers were provided in our prior comments.

The proposed revision to GR 34(a) and the Comment attached to the email from Jude Cryderman on May 27, 2010, will substantially address many of our concerns and we strongly support the changes. We note that there may be a typographical error in the Comment in reference to RCW 36.18.018(5), which we believe is intended to refer to the statute authorizing the Judicial Surcharge fee, RCW 36.18.020(5). Also, given the fact that *any* fee or cost charged by the courts should be waivable as a matter of law, if the specific "mandatory" fees are to be set out in the Comment, we ask that the Comment also be slightly revised to show the intent that the listed fees are examples only and not exclusive. Thus, we suggest inserting in the second sentence of the new language, "but are not limited to,...", such that the language would read: "These include, but are not limited to, legislatively established filing fees and surcharges (e.g. RCW 36.18.018(2), 36.18.020(5));..."

Thank you and the Court for its thoughtful consideration. We anticipate the Court's adoption of a rule that promotes the highest values of access to justice for all.

Sincerely,

Deborah Perluss
Director of Advocacy/General Counsel

C César E. Torres



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