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WASHINGTON STATE COALITION



AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

April 26, 2010

Ronald R. Carpenter, Clerk
Washington Supreme Court
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Attn: Camilla Faulk

Re: Proposed Civil Rule 43-Taking of Testimony

Dear Mr. Carpenter:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on proposed CR 43, relating to taking of testimony in civil cases. The Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV) submits these comments recommending the approval of proposed GR 43 to provide for taking testimony in court proceedings through transmission from a different location in compelling circumstances and for good cause. As you may be aware, WSCADV is a private non-profit membership organization comprised of sixty-eight domestic violence shelter and advocacy organizations in Washington State committed to ending domestic violence.

Providing for the taking of testimony from a remote location can greatly increase access to the civil legal system and the protections it may afford for domestic violence survivors by taking into account issues relating to safety, travel, and limited financial resources. The proposed rule will also likely reduce the ability of domestic violence abusers to manipulate the court system and utilize the judicial process as an additional tool of power and intimidation.

Domestic violence abusers often attempt to utilize the litigation and the court process as a means of intimidation and control over their victims. Some of their tactics may include, but are not limited to: threats of violence, intimidating gestures during proceedings, following the victim in and out of court, stalking the victim at the courthouse, requesting repeated delays in proceedings, forcing the rescheduling of multiple hearings (at the expense of all parties involved), and using intimidating gestures during court proceedings.

I hope this information has been useful and will be carefully considered by the Supreme Court. If you have any further questions you can contact me. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,
WASHINGTON STATE COALITION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GRACE HUANG', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

GRACE HUANG
Public Policy Program Coordinator