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From: Evy McElmeel [mailto:emaclaw@me.com]
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I oppose any action to increase the amount of secrecy or sealing of civil justice records under GR 15.

Public trust is founded in an open and transparent civil justice system. This essential component on the three legged stool of our government would be undermined by any increase in secrecy regarding legal proceedings.

There are numerous examples of wrongdoers using sealed records to hide information important to the public health, safety and welfare. In *Aleksich v Remington*, a known trigger defect in a rifle, resulting in the death of its users, was hidden in sealed court records. In *Toe v Cooper Tire*, Cooper Tire attempted to hide their tire defects resulting in fatal rollover accidents by sealing deposition transcripts. This list goes on in virtually every industry.

In Washington worker compensation cases it is very common for large, powerful and well financed self-insured employers to demand confidentiality as part of any settlement. Through this mechanism they are able to hide unsafe working conditions, discriminatory acts and economic exploitation of their injured workers.

Allowance of sealed and secret records should be stringently limited to a very high showing of need for confidentiality. All other records should be public. This rule should apply regardless of whether legal proceedings have been fully invoked or whether the legal records are part of preliminary proceedings, i.e. discovery.

Thank you very much.

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