

# SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

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**April 30, 2014**

**Justice Charles Johnson**

**Supreme Court Rules Committee**

**c/o Clerk of the Supreme Court**

**P.O. Box 40929**

**Olympia, WA 98504-0929**

**RE: Proposed JuCR 1.6 – Physical Restraints in the Courtroom**

**Dear Justice Johnson and Members of the Rules Committee:**

**I am an attorney representing students who appear in truancy hearings in Skagit County. Approximately half of my clients are children who are currently receiving special education services at school. Some of these students are in middle school. If they are taken into custody, they will be restrained. This occurs as they stand in the courtroom in front of their peers.**

**Students who are brought from detention to appear in court are also restrained. They are cuffed at the wrists; a chain attaches from the wrist-chain to the waist-chain. This waist-chain is often doubled around their torsos.**

**As an attorney in truancy court, I routinely make the request for my clients to be un-cuffed. The restraints are humiliating. I have heard that by restraining my clients in front of other students, the Court is making an example of them. I don't believe that humiliation is a good learning tool.**

**Sincerely,**

**Katherine Prunty**