

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:

My name is Tim Williamson. I am a resident at Green Hill School in Chehalis, WA. I am part of Youth Voice and would like to give my input on the issue regarding people wearing physical restraints while in the court room. From my past, I have worn physical restraints while in the court room and meeting with my attorney. It doesn't make you feel like anybody really cares about you and you're being treated like an animal. I noticed that a lot of courts are public and I saw a lot of people I didn't know while I was in court for my case. I felt I was already guilty because I was shackled. For me, and I'm pretty sure for others, being shackled or having any kind of physical restraints on while dealing with a legal matter is really stressful because you are already stressed out being at court, and it gives you a feeling of hopelessness, shamefulness, and it lowers your self-esteem. It makes you depressed so by the time you get through with the court or trial, you're so stressed from the emotions that you don't even want to try anymore. When I met with an attorney shackled up the first thing she did was look at my shackles, then she introduced herself. By the time she got done going over paperwork with me, she must have looked at my shackles like 20 times and asked me if they were too tight and if I wanted them loosened because they looked too tight. I understand that people wear physical restraints while in court to keep themselves safe and to keep others safe, but if they are doing good at the facility they are at they shouldn't have to wear restraints while in court because it takes away some of their pride and self-confidence.

Sincerely,
Tim Williamson