



January 30, 2017

Clerk of the Supreme Court
Temple of Justice
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Re: Suggested Technical Change to Civil Rule 23

Dear Honorable Members of the Washington State Supreme Court:

The Pro Bono Council is a convening body to represent and advocate for the network of 17 individual Volunteer Lawyer Programs (VLPs) in Washington. The VLPs provide free, high quality, efficient, and innovative civil legal assistance to low income people through the recruitment, training, supervision, and support of volunteer lawyers. Each VLP is at least partially funded by state and private resources granted by the Legal Foundation of Washington (LFW). Unrestricted funding from LFW allows VLPs the flexibility to assess and adjust services according to ever-changing demands for critically needed civil legal help.

According to the 2015 Civil Legal Needs Study (Study), the number of people who live in poverty in Washington State increased significantly since 2000. The Study also revealed that more than 70% of low income households experience at least one civil legal need each year and only 24% of low-income people in our state who need legal aid are able to access services. The Study underscored the importance of legal help as it revealed that nearly two-thirds of those who sought and received some level of assistance were able to solve some portion of their legal problem. With the possibility of increased funding from class action residual funds, VLPs will be well positioned to improve and increase services for low-income individuals and families in Washington State.

The Pro Bono Council strongly supports the suggested technical change to CR 23, increasing the minimum amount of class action residual funds that are directed to LFW from 25% to 50%. We appreciate the Supreme Court's on-going commitment to closing the justice gap for the most vulnerable in our communities. Please be in touch if we can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Haslam
PBC Co-Chair

Threesa Milligan
PBC Co-Chair

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Tracy, Mary

From: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK
Sent: Thursday, March 02, 2017 4:32 PM
To: Tracy, Mary
Subject: FW: Letter of Support for Suggested Technical Change to Civil Rule 23
Attachments: CR 23 letter of support.pdf

Supreme Court Clerk's Office

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From: Catherine Brown [mailto:CatherineB@kcba.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 02, 2017 4:25 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Letter of Support for Suggested Technical Change to Civil Rule 23

Dear Clerk of the Washington State Supreme Court,

Please find attached a letter from the Pro Bono Council in support of the suggested technical change to Civil Rule 23. Please be in touch if the Pro Bono Council can provide any additional information about this issue.

Sincerely,

Catherine Brown
Pro Bono Council Manager
(206) 267-7026
[Pro Bono Document Hub](#)