

Tracy, Mary

From: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK
Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2018 1:57 PM
To: Tracy, Mary
Subject: FW: Comments on WA Proposed APR 8

Forwarding

From: Sarah.Stahelin@llojibwe.org [mailto:Sarah.Stahelin@llojibwe.org]
Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2018 1:49 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Comments on WA Proposed APR 8

Dear Honorable Justices of the Washington Supreme Court,

I am writing you in support of the proposed changes to Washington's Rules concerning waiving pro hac vice requirements for attorneys representing tribes in Indian Child Welfare Cases. As a Tribe with member children residing all over the United States, we are often asked to appear in cases involving Leech Lake Children that are outside the State of Minnesota. We have appeared in ICWA cases in your State a few times. If Leech Lake were forced to pay extra fees and local attorney costs to appear in these cases occurring outside of Minnesota, it would soon become cost prohibitive for us to appear. Indeed, we have been silenced in such ways by Courts in other jurisdictions that do force Tribes to abide by pro hac vice rules, and as a result, have made a choice to limit our participation in those cases rather than pay these costs. This only hurts children and deprives the Court and families of a valuable voice in planning for the welfare of Leech Lake's children. To place a financial barrier on Tribes who are already working under the burdens of limited resources would defeat the purpose and spirit of ICWA, which is meant to maximize tribal participation in cases involving the welfare of their member children.

We applaud Washington for being proactive in addressing this issue and fully support this change in the Rule and ask your Court to adopt these proposed amendments.

Sarah M. Stahelin, Tribal Attorney (MN Atty #0316118)
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe -- Legal Department
190 Sailstar Drive NE
Cass Lake, MN 56633
Phone: 218.335.3514

This e-mail is intended only for the use of those to whom it is addressed and may contain information which is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under the law. If you have received this e-mail in error, do not distribute or copy it. Return it immediately to the sender with attachments, if any, and notify the sender immediately.