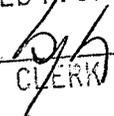


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IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

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STATE OF WASHINGTON,

Petitioner,

v.

REYES RIOS RUIZ AND JESUS DAVID BUELNA VALDEZ,

Respondents.

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**AMICUS CURIAE BRIEF OF  
WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF PROSECUTING  
ATTORNEYS**

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## I. OVERVIEW

The Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (“WAPA”) files this *amicus curiae* brief addressing the effect of the recent United States Supreme Court opinion in Arizona v. Gant, \_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_, 129 S.Ct. 1710 (2009), on cases involving vehicle searches incident to arrest conducted before the Gant decision and that are pending in trial courts or on appeal.

As a preliminary matter, WAPA notes that if the vehicle search was improper under pre-Gant case law, it remains improper. In such a circumstance, there is no need to reach the question of the effect of Gant on the case. The search is invalid and the evidence must be suppressed.

Assuming the search would have been proper under pre-Gant case law, the question of the application of Gant to the case must be addressed. WAPA agrees that Gant applies retroactively to all non-final cases pending in trial courts and on appeal. Gant, however, does not require reversal of every vehicle search conducted incident to arrest. Gant approves of vehicle searches under a variety of circumstances and the facts must be examined on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the search remains valid even under a retroactive application of Gant.

If there is no basis to uphold the validity of the search under Gant, WAPA respectfully submits that evidence obtained during vehicle

searches conducted in reliance on pre-Gant case law should not be suppressed. Searches conducted pursuant to presumptively valid case law remain valid despite the fact that the case law is subsequently deemed to be unconstitutional. This argument is the primary focus of this *amicus curiae* brief.

Because Gant was decided under the Fourth Amendment, and did not purport to address or overrule state constitutional law, the analysis should focus on the federal exclusionary rule. The federal exclusionary rule has long recognized reversal is not required when officers relied in good faith on a statute that is subsequently deemed unconstitutional.

The same result holds true, however, under article I, § 7 of the Washington Constitution. As the Washington Supreme Court has recently recognized, reliance on a presumptively valid statute does not require reversal of convictions obtained under that statute, even when the statute is later held to be unconstitutional. The same reasoning applies here, when officers have relied on long-standing and presumptively valid federal and state case law allowing vehicle searches incident to arrest.

## II. ISSUES

(1) What is the effect of the recent United State Supreme Court decision in Arizona v. Gant on cases involving a vehicle search incident to arrest that are currently pending in trial courts and on appeal?

(2) Does the “good faith” exception to the exclusionary rule under the Fourth Amendment require suppression of evidence?

(3) Does article I, § 7 of the Washington constitution require suppression of evidence obtained when officers conducted a search under authority of presumptively valid state and federal case law?

### III. RELEVANT FACTS

The underlying search at issue in this case occurred on May 10, 2005. The defendants were found guilty after a bench trial.

On February 13, 2007, the Court of Appeals reversed the defendants’ convictions finding that the scope of the K-9 unit search exceeded the permissible scope of the search incident to arrest.

This Court accepted discretionary review and oral argument was held on June 6, 2008.

On April 21, 2009, the United States Supreme Court decided Arizona v. Gant, \_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_, 129 S.Ct. 1710 (2009).

On May 1, 2009, this Court requested supplemental briefing addressing the U.S. Supreme Court opinion in Arizona v. Gant.

The parties have filed supplemental briefing and WAPA now files an *amicus curiae* brief in support of Clark County addressing the applicability of Arizona v. Gant to the present case.

#### IV. ARGUMENT

##### A. SUMMARY OF ARIZONA v. GANT.

In Arizona v. Gant, \_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_, 129 S.Ct. 1710 (2009), the United States Supreme Court adopted two new rules concerning vehicle searches incident to arrest. The first is that police may search a vehicle incident to arrest only when the passenger is unsecured and within reaching distance of the vehicle's passenger compartment. Gant, 129 S.Ct. at 1714. The second is that circumstances unique to the automobile context justify a search incident to arrest when it is reasonable to believe that evidence of the offense of arrest might be found in the vehicle. Id.

Gant also recognized that vehicle searches might be proper for other reasons, including probable cause to believe that evidence of a crime was present in the vehicle, officer safety, and exigent circumstances.

Gant, 129 S.Ct. at 1721.

##### B. APPLICATION OF ARIZONA v. GANT TO PENDING CASES.

WAPA agrees that Gant must be applied to cases currently pending in trial courts and on direct.<sup>1</sup> Griffith v. Kentucky, 479 U.S. 314, 328, 107 S. Ct. 708, 93 L. Ed. 2d 649 (1987) (a new rule for the conduct of criminal

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<sup>1</sup> Because Gant articulated a new constitutional rule that represents a clean break from the past it will not apply to cases on collateral review. Teague v. Lane, 489 U.S. 288, 298, 311, 109 S. Ct. 1060, 103 L. Ed. 2d 334 (1989).

prosecutions is to be applied retroactively to all cases, state or federal, pending on direct review or not yet final, with no exception for cases in which the new rule constitutes a “clear break” with the past); Teague v. Lane, 489 U.S. 288, 302-04, 109 S. Ct. 1060, 103 L. Ed. 2d 334 (1989); In re St. Pierre, 118 Wn.2d 321, 326, 823 P.2d 492 (1992).

The analysis, however, does not end with the simple “retroactive” application of Gant. First, under the rules articulated in Gant, the search of a vehicle incident to arrest may still be proper because Gant permits vehicle searches under several alternative basis.<sup>2</sup> That is, it will be necessary in pending cases to determine whether – under the rules articulated in Gant – the search was nevertheless proper.

Second, there is a separate question as to whether the exclusionary rule requires suppression of the evidence found during a vehicle search conducted prior to the Gant decision. WAPA respectfully suggests that under the federal “good faith” exception to the exclusionary rule there is no basis to suppress the evidence obtained in good faith reliance on pre-Gant case law. Moreover, under article I, § 7 of the Washington constitution, when officers conducted a search of a vehicle under authority

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<sup>2</sup> It appears that no alternative basis to search exist in this case. The evidence may, however, be admissible pursuant to the independent source or inevitable discovery doctrines. WAPA offers no opinion on this point.

of presumptively valid case law in effect at the time of the search, the evidence obtained during the vehicle search should not be suppressed.

**C. EVIDENCE OBTAINED IN RELIANCE ON PRESUMPTIVELY VALID PRE-GANT CASE LAW SHOULD NOT BE SUPPRESSED.**

**1. The Fourth Amendment good faith exception to the exclusionary rule.**

Absent an exception to the warrant requirement, a warrantless search is impermissible under the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.<sup>3</sup> The exclusionary rule is "a judicially created remedy designed to safeguard Fourth Amendment rights *generally through its deterrent effect*" by excluding evidence that is the fruit of an illegal, warrantless search. United States v. Calandra, 414 U.S. 338, 347, 94 S. Ct 613, 38 L. Ed. 2d 561 (1974) (emphasis added). Evidence derived directly or indirectly from illegal police conduct is an ill-gotten gain, "fruit of the poisonous tree," that should be excluded from evidence. Wong Sun v. United States, 371 U.S. 471, 484-85, 83 S. Ct 407, 9 L. Ed. 2d 441 (1963). Nevertheless, the United States Supreme Court has recognized that evidence obtained after an illegal search should not be excluded if it was

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<sup>3</sup> Gant was decided purely on Fourth Amendment grounds. Gant, 129 S.Ct. at 1714. Absent any basis to address state constitutional issues, the Fourth Amendment analysis is controlling. Nevertheless, WAPA addresses the good faith exception under both the Fourth Amendment and article I, § 7.

not obtained by the exploitation of the initial illegality. Wong Sun, 371 U.S. at 488.

Consistent with these basic principles, the United States Supreme Court in Michigan v. DeFillippo, 443 U.S. 31, 38, 99 S. Ct. 2627, 61 L. Ed. 2d 343 (1979), held that an arrest (and subsequent search) under a statute that was valid at the time of the arrest remains valid even if the statute is later held to be unconstitutional.

In DeFillippo, the Court stated:

At that time [of the underlying arrest], of course, there was no controlling precedent that this ordinance was or was not constitutional, and hence the conduct observed violated a presumptively valid ordinance. *A prudent officer*, in the course of determining whether respondent had committed an offense under all the circumstances shown by this record, *should not have been required to anticipate that a court would later hold the ordinance unconstitutional.*

Police are charged to enforce laws until and unless they are declared unconstitutional. The enactment of a law forecloses speculation by enforcement officers concerning its constitutionality – with the possible exception of a law so grossly and flagrantly unconstitutional that any person of reasonable prudence would be bound to see its flaws. *Society would be ill-served if its police officers took it upon themselves to determine which laws are and which are not constitutionally entitled to enforcement.*

DeFillippo, 443 U.S. at 37-38 (emphasis added). The Court further noted:

[T]he purpose of the exclusionary rule is to deter unlawful police action. *No conceivable purpose of deterrence would be served by suppressing evidence which, at the time it was found on the person of the respondent, was the product of a lawful arrest and a lawful search.* To deter police from

enforcing a presumptively valid statute was never remotely in the contemplation of even the most zealous advocate of the exclusionary rule.

DeFillippo, 443 U.S. at 38, n.3 (emphasis added). The Court recognized a “narrow exception” when the law is “so grossly and flagrantly unconstitutional that any person of reasonable prudence would be bound to see its flaws.” DeFillippo, 443 U.S. at 37-38.

Accordingly, in DeFillippo the Supreme Court upheld the arrest, search, and subsequent conviction of the defendant even though the statute that justified the stop was subsequently deemed to be unconstitutional.<sup>4</sup> DeFillippo, 443 U.S. at 40; see also Illinois v. Krull, 480 U.S. 340, 349-50, 107 S. Ct. 1160, 94 L. Ed. 2d 364 (1987) (upholding warrantless administrative searches performed in good-faith reliance on a statute later declared unconstitutional).

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<sup>4</sup> DeFillippo is entirely consistent with the Supreme Court’s exclusionary rule analysis. As the U.S. Supreme Court noted in a recent opinion:

[E]xclusion “has always been our last resort, not our first impulse,” ... and our precedents establish important principles that constrain application of the exclusionary rule.

First, the exclusionary rule is not an individual right and applies only where it “result[s] in appreciable deterrence.” ... We have repeatedly rejected the argument that exclusion is a necessary consequence of a Fourth Amendment violation.... Instead we have focused on the efficacy of the rule in deterring Fourth Amendment violations in the future....

Herring v. United States, \_\_\_, U.S. \_\_\_, 129 S. Ct. 695, 700, 172 L. Ed. 2d 496 (2009) (citations omitted).

The only difference between DeFillippo and the present case is the nature of the legal authority relied upon by the officer conducting the search. In DeFillippo, the arrest was based on a presumptively valid *statute* that was later ruled unconstitutional. In the present case, the search was conducted pursuant to a procedure upheld as constitutional by well-established and long-standing *judicial pronouncements*. This distinction does not justify a different result.

Law enforcement officers should be entitled to rely on established case law – from both the federal and state courts – in determining what searches are deemed constitutional. Indeed, in the area of search and seizure it is generally the courts that establish the “rules,” not the legislative bodies. Judicial decisions, particularly those of the Supreme Court, as to the constitutionality of searches and seizures are clearly entitled to respect, deference, and reliance by officers in the field.

The good faith exception has been applied by the United States Supreme Court in many contexts involving the reliance by law enforcement officers on presumptively valid assertions by the judiciary.<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., United States v. Leon, 468 U.S. 897, 922, 104 S. Ct. 3405 (1984) (when police act under a warrant that is invalid for lack of probable cause,

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<sup>5</sup> For a recent discussion of federal cases recognizing the “good faith” exception to the exclusionary rule, see Herring, 129 S. Ct. at 704.

the exclusionary rule does not apply if the police acted “in objectively reasonable reliance” on the subsequently invalidated search warrant); Massachusetts v. Sheppard, 468 U.S. 981, 991, 104 S. Ct. 3424, 82 L. Ed. 2d 737 (1984) (exclusionary rule does not apply when a warrant was invalid because a judge forgot to make “clerical corrections”); Arizona v. Evans, 514 U.S. 1, 10, 115 S. Ct. 1185, 131 L. Ed. 2d 34 (1995) (applying good-faith rule to police who reasonably relied on mistaken information in a court's database that an arrest warrant was outstanding).

Given this history, there is no reason to conclude that law enforcement officers are not entitled to rely on the ultimate presumptively valid judicial assertion: opinions issued by the United States Supreme Court and Washington Supreme Court.

**2. Under article I, § 7, a search conducted in reliance on presumptively valid case law should not be suppressed.**

Under article I, § 7, the exclusionary rule has been extended beyond the original Fourth Amendment context. See, e.g., State v. Bond, 98 Wn.2d 1, 10-13, 653 P.2d 1024 (1982) (and cases cited therein) (“we view the purpose of the exclusionary rule from a slightly different perspective than does the United States Supreme Court”). However, even under the more stringent article I, § 7 analysis, when officers obtain evidence in reasonable reliance on presumptively valid statute, the

exclusionary rule does not apply. The same result should apply when law enforcement officers rely on presumptively valid judicial authority.

In State v. White, 97 Wn.2d 92, 640 P.2d 1061 (1982), this Court addressed a situation involving an arrest premised upon a flagrantly unconstitutional “stop and identify” statute that negated the probable cause requirement of the Fourth Amendment. Id. at 106. This Court concluded that article I, § 7 provided greater protection than the Fourth Amendment, that the officer’s subjective good faith in relying on the statute was not relevant, and that the federal subjective “good faith” exception to the exclusionary rule was not applicable in Washington. Id. at 110.

Nevertheless, this Court in White specifically stated that the remedy of exclusion should be applied only when the underlying right to privacy is “unreasonably violated.” White, 97 Wn.2d at 110-12. Three specific concerns justifying the application of the exclusionary rule were articulated: (1) to protect privacy interests of individuals from *unreasonable* governmental intrusions, (2) to *deter* the police from acting unlawfully in obtaining evidence, and (3) to *preserve the dignity* of the judiciary by refusing to consider evidence obtained by unlawful means. White, 97 Wn.2d. at 109-12; Bond, 98 Wn.2d at 12.

In addition, this Court has emphasized that in applying the exclusionary rule under article I, § 7 it is also appropriate to consider the

costs of doings so. See, e.g., Bond, 98 Wn. App. at 14 (“we have little hesitation in concluding that the costs [of excluding the evidence are] clearly outweighed by the limited benefits that would be obtained from excluding the confessions because of the illegal arrest.”) As will be discussed in detail below, none of these concerns are implicated under the unique facts of the present case.

White involved a flagrantly unconstitutional statute. It did not assess a statute or judicial opinion that was presumptively valid.<sup>6</sup> More recently, however, this Court has explicitly held in two cases that an arrest or search conducted in reliance on a presumptively valid statute that was subsequently deemed unconstitutional does not require suppression of the evidence. See State v. Potter, 156 Wn.2d 835, 132 P.3d 1089 (2006); State v. Brockob, 159 Wn.2d 311, 341-42, 150 P.3d 59 (2006).

In State v. Potter, 156 Wn.2d 835, 132 P.3d 1089 (2006), the defendants maintained that they were unlawfully arrested for driving while their licenses were suspended because, subsequent to their arrests, the State Supreme Court held that the statutory procedures by which the Department of Licensing suspended licenses were unconstitutional.<sup>7</sup> The

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<sup>6</sup> For a critique of the White analysis, see State v. Kirwin, 203 P.3d 1044, 1051-54 (2009) (Madsen, J., concurring).

<sup>7</sup> The defendants in Potter were relying on City of Redmond v. Moore, 151 Wn.2d 664, 91 P.3d 875 (2004).

defendants in Potter argued that under article I, § 7 evidence of controlled substances found during searches of their vehicles incident to arrest had to be suppressed because their arrests were illegal.

In a unanimous decision, this Court applied the DeFillippo rule under article I, § 7, and held that an arrest under a statute valid at the time of the arrest remains valid even if the basis for the arrest is subsequently found unconstitutional. Potter, 156 Wn.2d at 843. This Court stated:

In White, we held that a stop-and-identify statute was unconstitutionally vague and, applying the United States Supreme Court's exception to the general rule from DeFillippo, excluded evidence under that narrow exception for a law "so grossly and flagrantly unconstitutional" that any reasonable person would see its flaws.

Potter, 156 Wn.2d at 843 (quoting White, 97 Wn.2d at 103 (quoting DeFillippo, 443 U.S. at 38)).

Under the facts presented in Potter, because there were no prior cases holding that license suspension procedures in general were unconstitutional, there was no basis to assume that the statutory provisions were grossly and flagrantly unconstitutional. Accordingly, applying DeFillippo, this Court affirmed the convictions despite the fact that the statutory licensing procedures at issue had subsequently been held to be unconstitutional. Potter, 156 Wn.2d at 843.

Similarly, in State v. Brockob, 159 Wn.2d 311, 341-42, 150 P.3d 59 (2006), a defendant contended that his arrest for driving while his license was suspended and a search incident to that arrest were unlawful for the reasons claimed in Potter. This Court rejected the defendant's argument, stating that:

White held that police officers may rely on the presumptive validity of statutes in determining whether there is probable cause to make an arrest unless the law is “‘so grossly and flagrantly unconstitutional’ by virtue of a prior dispositive judicial holding that it may not serve as the basis for a valid arrest.”

Brockob, 159 Wn.2d at 341 n.19 (quoting White, 97 Wn.2d at 103 (quoting DeFillippo, 443 U.S. at 38)). As in Potter, the Court held that the narrow exception did not apply “because no law relating to driver's license suspensions had previously been struck down.” Brockob, 159 Wn.2d at 341, n.19.

Potter and Brockob recognize that White was addressing a unique situation: what should be the remedy when an arrest or search is conducted pursuant to a flagrantly unconstitutional statute. Such arrests and searches are presumptively unreasonable, regardless of the officer's subjective good faith reliance on the statute. White did not address reliance on a presumptively valid statute. As Potter and Brockob make clear, however, reliance on the presumptively valid statute is reasonable, does not

implicate article I, § 7 because the search was conducted pursuant to authority of law, and does not require suppression of the evidence obtained in the course of the arrest or search.

As discussed above, the only difference between Potter and Brockob and the present case is that the present scenario involves presumptively valid *case law*, as opposed to a presumptively valid *statute*. This distinction should have no bearing on the analysis: judicial opinions of the United States Supreme Court and the Washington Supreme Court should be viewed as least as presumptively valid as legislative enactments.

**3. Under the facts of this case, the officers were relying on presumptively valid pre-Gant case law and the evidence should not be suppressed.**

The vehicle search incident to arrest in this case was conducted before the United State Supreme Court decision in Arizona v. Gant, decided on April 21, 2009. Prior to that date, numerous federal and state judicial opinions law allowed vehicle searches incident to arrest. Accordingly, those searched should be upheld because the search was conducted pursuant to presumptively valid case law.

There is no doubt that prior to Gant, federal and state courts had unequivocally endorsed the constitutional validity of vehicle searches incident to arrest. This is not a situation such as White where there was a prior suggestion that the rule being applied might be unconstitutional. It is

not even the situation addressed in Potter and Brockob where the constitutionality of the statute had never been addressed before (and was thus “presumptively” valid). Instead, this is a situation in which the highest federal and state courts had specifically and repeatedly endorsed the procedures used by law enforcement.

Prior to Gant, federal case law clearly approved a bright-line test allowing the search of a vehicle incident to the lawful arrest of a passenger or occupant. See, e.g., Chimel v. California, 395 U.S. 752, 89 S. Ct. 2034, 23 L. Ed. 2d 685 (1969); New York v. Belton, 453 U.S. 454, 101 S. Ct. 2860, 69 L. Ed. 2d 768 (1981). Indeed, Gant recognized that the Court’s prior opinions have “been *widely understood to allow a vehicle search incident to the arrest of a recent occupant* even if there is no possibility the arrestee could gain access to the vehicle at the time of the search . . .” and that “*lower court decisions seem now to treat the ability to search a vehicle incident to the arrest of a recent occupant as a police entitlement rather than as an exception.*”<sup>8</sup> Gant, 129 S.Ct. at 1718 (emphasis added).

Likewise, the constitutionality of the search incident to arrest rule had been repeatedly endorsed and affirmed by the Washington Supreme

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<sup>8</sup> That the majority in Gant spent considerable time arguing that the new rule was justified in spite of the doctrine of *stare decisis* is further evidence that the Court was promulgating a new rule that represented a clear break from prior precedent. Gant, 129 S.Ct. at 1722-24.

Court over the past twenty-three years. See, e.g., State v. Stroud, 106 Wn.2d 144, 153, 720 P.2d 436 (1986); State v. Vrieling, 144 Wn.2d 489, 28 P.3d 762 (2001); State v. Parker, 139 Wn.2d 486, 489, 987 P.2d 73 (1999); State v. Johnson, 128 Wn.2d 431, 441, 909 P.2d 293 (1996); State v. Fladebo, 113 Wn.2d 388, 779 P.2d 707 (1989).

Thus, this case does not fit within the narrow exception, recognized in DeFillippo and White, that precludes officers from relying upon laws that are “so grossly and flagrantly unconstitutional that any person of reasonable prudence would be bound to see its flaws.” The pre-Gant cases may now be viewed as flawed, but the repeated judicial reliance on them for almost 30 years demonstrates that the search incident to arrest rule was neither grossly nor flagrantly unconstitutional.

There can be little doubt that law enforcement officers can rely on these specific judicial pronouncements when conducting vehicle searches. To conclude otherwise would be equivalent of asserting that officers could never rely on judicial authority. In this regard, it is significant that the majority opinion in Gant emphasized that officers reasonably relied on pre-Gant precedent and were immune from civil liability for searches conducted in accordance with the Court’s previous opinions. Gant, 129 S.Ct. at 1723, n.11.

Moreover, the most basic purpose of the exclusionary rule is not furthered in any way by suppression of the evidence in this case. As the Court in DeFillippo noted, no conceivable deterrent effect would be served by suppressing evidence which, at the time it was found, was the product of a lawful search. Prior to April 21, 2009, officers understood that they *could* search a vehicle incident to the arrest of a recent occupant. After April 21, 2009, officer will know that they *cannot* conduct such searches and Gant will deter such conduct. But the retroactive application of the exclusionary rule has no deterrent value at all.

Nor is the preservation of judicial integrity, the other basis sometimes relied upon when applying the exclusionary rule, implicated in these circumstances.<sup>9</sup> In the context of the reliance by law enforcement officers on judicially created evidentiary rules, judicial integrity is not enhanced by failing to recognize that officers act in reliance on judicial authority. Rather, integrity is preserved by recognizing that law enforcement officers must rely on judicial opinions to guide their behavior and cannot be expected to do otherwise. Integrity is preserved by

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<sup>9</sup> This rationale was first articulated by Justice Brandeis in his dissenting opinion in Olmstead v. United States, 277 U.S. 438, 483-85, 48 S. Ct. 564, 574-75, 72 L. Ed. 944 (1928). Justice Brandeis argued that when the government is permitted to use illegally obtained evidence in courts of law, the integrity of the judiciary itself is tarnished. See also Stone v. Powell, 428 U.S. 465, 485, 96 S. Ct. 3037, 3048, 49 L. Ed. 2d 1067 (1976), where judicial integrity is mentioned as a secondary rationale); White, 97 Wn.2d at 110.

consistency; it is undermined if officers (and citizens) conclude that they can no longer rely in good faith on clearly articulated judicial pronouncements. Moreover, integrity is not sacrificed when the judiciary changes its mind on a constitutional principle, upon fresh examination of its reasoning, but minimizes the impact of its new ruling as to those who relied on its earlier pronouncements.

Finally, there is a clear cost in this and similarly-situated cases that is not outweighed by any deterrent effect in applying the rule.<sup>10</sup> Evidence of criminal activity was validly obtained pursuant to a vehicle search incident to arrest. There is no deterrent effect on law enforcement whatsoever by retroactively enforcing a rule the officers knew nothing about. The costs of excluding the evidence obtained in all pending cases with a possible Gant issue are not justified by the potential benefit in deterrence.

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<sup>10</sup> As the U.S. Supreme Court has noted, the benefits of the deterrent effect when applying the exclusionary rule should outweigh the costs:

In addition, the benefits of deterrence must outweigh the costs. . . . “We have never suggested that the exclusionary rule must apply in every circumstance in which it might provide marginal deterrence.” . . . “[T]o the extent that application of the exclusionary rule could provide some incremental deterrent, that possible benefit must be weighed against [its] substantial social costs.” . . . The principal cost of applying the rule is, of course, letting guilty and possibly dangerous defendants go free—something that “offends basic concepts of the criminal justice system.” . . . “[T]he rule’s costly toll upon truth-seeking and law enforcement objectives presents a high obstacle for those urging [its] application.” . . .

Herring v. United States, \_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_, 129 S. Ct. 695, 700-01, 172 L. Ed. 2d 496 (2009) (citations omitted); see also Bond, 98 Wn.2d at 14.

In sum, the United States Supreme Court has recognized that the application of the exclusionary rule serves no purpose when officers relied in good faith on a presumptively valid statute. This Court has recognized that the exclusionary rule does not apply when officers relied on a presumptively valid statute. This same reasoning should apply to judicial opinions of long-standing duration. The evidence obtained during the search in the present case should not be suppressed.

**4. The art. I, § 7 exclusionary rule has traditionally been interpreted consistently with the federal rule.**

That White is an application of the federal exclusionary rule is entirely consistent with the fact that Washington courts have historically interpreted the exclusionary rule in a manner that is generally consistent with federal law. Contrary to the suggestion put forth in the supplemental brief filed in this case by appellant Buelna-Valdez, it is not the case that the “independent and automatic nature of the Washington exclusionary rule is . . . long-established.”

The Washington State Constitution, adopted in 1889, provides that, “No person shall be disturbed in his private affairs, or his home invaded, without authority of law.” Const. art. I, § 7. At common law, courts took no notice of whether evidence was properly seized; if relevant, it was

admissible.<sup>11</sup> Commonwealth v. Dana, 43 Mass. 329 (2 met. 1841); 4 J. Wigmore, Evidence § 2183 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1923). This was the rule recognized in Washington in 1889. State v. Nordstrom, 7 Wash. 506, 35 P. 382 (1893); State v. Burns, 19 Wash. 52, 52 P. 316 (1898).

In 1886, the United States Supreme Court appeared to signal a different approach when it suppressed private papers seized pursuant to a court order, holding that seizure and use of the private papers as evidence was tantamount to compelling the defendant to testify against himself. Boyd v. United States, 116 U.S. 616, 6 S. Ct. 524, 29 L. Ed. 746 (1886). But the United States Supreme Court essentially repudiated Boyd in Adams v. New York, 192 U.S. 585, 598, 24 S. Ct. 372, 48 L. Ed. 575 (1905) (“...the English, and nearly all the American, cases have declined to extend this doctrine to the extent of excluding testimony which has been obtained by such means, if it is otherwise competent”).

Like most courts at that time, the Washington Supreme Court specifically rejected Boyd and held that relevant evidence was admissible, regardless of its source. State v. Royce, 38 Wash. 11, 80 P. 268 (1905) (evidence derived from improper search of burglary suspect need not be suppressed).

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<sup>11</sup> The meaning and scope of a constitutional provision is determined by examining the law at the time of enactment. State v. Smith, 150 Wn.2d 135, 75 P.3d 934 (2003).

Nine years later, the United States Supreme Court reintroduced an exclusionary rule. Weeks v. United States, 232 U.S. 383, 34 S. Ct. 341, 58 L. Ed. 652 (1914). The next year, this Court followed the U.S. Supreme Court's lead and announced that an exclusionary rule would be recognized in Washington. State v. Gibbons, 118 Wash. 171, 184-85, 203 P. 390 (1922).

The ensuing decades of exclusionary rule jurisprudence can only be described as chaotic, as both state and federal courts struggled to find the proper balance between the need to protect constitutional rights and the interest in admitting relevant evidence. See e.g. State v. Young, 39 Wn.2d 910, 917, 239 P.2d 858 (1952).<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, this Court has generally followed the application of the rule in federal courts. As this Court said in State v. O'Bremski, 70 Wn.2d 425, 423 P.2d 530 (1967), "[w]e have consistently adhered to the exclusionary rule expounded by the United States Supreme Court..." See also State v. Biloche, 66 Wn.2d 325, 327, 402 P.2d 491 (1965) ("The law is well established in this state, consistent with the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, that evidence unlawfully seized will be excluded...").

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<sup>12</sup> "We do not wish to recede one iota from our [previous holding]. It is the duty of courts to protect citizens from unwarranted, arbitrary, illegal arrests by officers of the law. But we should not permit our zeal for protection of constitutional rights to blind us to our responsibility to other citizens who have the right to be protected from those who violate the law." Young, 39 Wn.2d at 917.

In sum, Washington's exclusionary rule has followed the general contours, progression, and application of the federal exclusionary rule. This Court's recognition (in Potter and Brockob) that White was simply an application of the narrow exception to the DeFillippo good faith rule is both appropriate and justified.

V. CONCLUSION

WAPA respectfully requests that, for the reasons outlined above, this Court uphold of the validity of the search of the vehicle incident to arrest because the officers were acting pursuant to presumptively valid case law at the time the search was conducted.

DATED this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of June, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:   
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Today I sent by electronic mail a copy of the AMICUS CURIAE BRIEF OF THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS, in State v. Reyes Ruiz and Jesus Valdez, Cause No. 80091-0, in the Supreme Court, for the State of Washington, directed to:

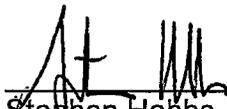
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I certify under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

  
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Stephen Hobbs  
Done in Seattle, Washington

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