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February 13, 2025

TO: Data Dissemination Committee

FROM: Patrizia Chirco, PhD, Jury and Community Senior Research Associate, Washington Center for Court Research

Frank Thomas, JD, Senior Court Program Analyst, Minority and Justice Commission

Kelley Amburgey-Richardson, JD, Manager, Supreme Court Commissions

Carl McCurley, PhD, Manager, Washington Center for Court Research

Amanda Gilman, PhD, Principal Research Associate, Washington Center for Court Research

RE: Jury Source List Data

The Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR) requests all address data from the jury source lists distributed to superior courts from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) under the research exemption found in GR 31(k). Below we state the subject and purpose of our request. This request is supported by and in service to the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission's statewide jury diversity initiative.

WSCCR currently supports two projects related to jury diversity through the collection of demographic and attitudinal data from respondents to jury summonses – the statewide juror demographic survey under RCW 2.36.280, and the Pierce County jury compensation pilot program. While reviewing the data collected during the first two months of the pilot, WSCCR compared the data to demographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau and noticed that certain zip codes were receiving a disproportionate number of summonses per capita. Because we have no reason to believe Pierce County's jury administration practices meaningfully deviate from any and every jurisdiction in Washington, WSCCR and the Minority and Justice Commission would like to solicit the initial source list address data from AOC. This data will allow the research team to evaluate whether and to what extent representative disparities exist within the initial composition within the jury administration process and serve as a first step in mapping out the causes of geographic over- and under-representation at each stage of the jury administration process.

We believe this request is consistent with the name and address exception, as well as the research exception, explicitly stated in GR 31(k). Furthermore, the research team is committed to maintaining juror anonymity, akin to what is mandated in the collection of the juror demographic data under RCW 2.36.180, by requesting only the data which includes the physical addresses listed on the source lists distributed to superior courts. Names and any other relevant identifying information may be redacted or wholly removed from any data shared with the research team and will not impact the efficacy of our inquiry into geographic representation.

Given these early findings, the project team has started to review summonsing practices with keen interest in the functioning of the inputs that courts receive for the purposes of constructing their jury master lists. In particular, we intend to utilize address information to analyze whether certain addresses, and consequently neighborhoods with disparate demographic composition, are overrepresented in juror source lists as a result of or in relation to their proportion in voter registration rolls and identity card holders, which comprise the primary sources for the juror source lists.

After the source lists are compiled each year by Washington Technology Solutions under RCW 2.36.054, they are then sent to the AOC for distribution to the courts. WSCCR researchers would require only access to the street addresses included therein at the time of distribution in order to conduct this analysis; we welcome redaction of any information that might compromise juror anonymity under GR 31, including the prospective jurors' names. We ask that you please consider this purpose's alignment with the research exemption to GR 31(k), the significant research implications of this data, and the ability to preserve juror anonymity in the distribution of this data in granting our request.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

Patrizia Chirco, PhD
Frank Thomas, JD
Kelley Amburgey-Richardson, JD
Carl McCurley, PhD
Amanda Gilman, PhD