

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
To: [Tracy, Mary](#)
Subject: FW: Support for PC 4.4 COMMENTARY AMENDMENT
Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2020 8:13:32 AM

From: Susan Marks [mailto:susanmarks@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, January 20, 2020 12:18 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Support for PC 4.4 COMMENTARY AMENDMENT

My name is Susan Marks, and I am writing to support the PC 4.4 Commentary Amendment to protect the rights of immigrants in our state.

This matters deeply to me. I have worked with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault for more than a decade, and I know how important it is for survivors to be able to have as much access and as few barriers as possible to our criminal legal system. I also know that both national and local data (collected in Whatcom County) have showed that immigrants are decreasing their reporting of these crimes because of their fears related to federal immigration policy.

Prosecutors are public servants who are responsible for the safety of all community members, regardless of their immigration status. Anecdotal data collected in Whatcom County showed that community members have noted that prosecutors often meet on-site at the courthouse with immigration officials as part of cases they are working on together; even this type of meeting, which has no implication for the detention or deportation of victims of crime, have been viewed with fear and led to mistrust. If prosecutors are actively collaborating with immigration enforcement such as ICE or CBP, even in one instance or on one case, that would lead the immigrant community to view prosecutors as people to be afraid of and to mistrust.

Everyone deserves the right to seek safety for themselves and accountability for those who have harmed them, and this is especially important to people who are abused by their intimate partners or who have been sexually assaulted. Survivors need to be able to participate in the criminal justice system - without fear of being detained or deported, and also without fear that the person who harmed them will be detained or deported because of their court action (many survivors still depend on their abuser for financial support or want them involved in co-parenting). Similarly, witness to domestic violence and sexual assault need to be able to present in court and testify without fears due to their immigration status.

Our communities are safer when everyone, regardless of their immigration status, are able to engage in prosecution and go to court, and this is especially true regarding domestic and sexual violence.

Sincerely,

Susan Marks