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Subject: FW: Public comment on proposed amendments to CrR 3.4
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From: Ulrey, Page [mailto:pulrey@kingcounty.gov]
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 12:00 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Public comment on proposed amendments to CrR 3.4

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To the Justices of the Supreme Court:

I write regarding the proposed amendments to the Superior Court Criminal Rules (CrR) 3.4 Presence of the Defendant.

I am a Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for King County. I have been a prosecutor with this office for over 20 years. I am familiar with CrR 3.4 and regularly appear in jury trials, guilty pleas, motions, and sentencings in King County Superior Court.

I have grave concerns about the proposed changes to the rule. Allowing defendants to appear remotely will create a host of issues with regard to their ability to fully be present for proceedings that are of the utmost importance to their fundamental rights. It will dramatically slow down procedures in courts that are already grossly overburdened. It will create countless issues on appeal, as defendants will inevitably experience connectivity issues, problems with hearing the judge or the witnesses against them, or being distracted by whatever is going on around them. It will deprive defendants of the ability to speak easily with their counsel during the proceedings. It will create endless problems with regard to their ability to see and sign documents that will affect them for the rest of their lives. Overall, it will result in a degradation of the criminal process that will cause a further erosion of faith in the criminal justice system by defendants, by victims and witnesses, and by the public.

Thank you.

Page Ulrey
Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Elder Abuse Project
King County Prosecutor's Office
516 Third Avenue, Suite W554
Seattle, WA 98104
Office: 206-263-3318
Email: pulrey@kingcounty.gov