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Subject: FW: Supporting the IRLJ Proposal
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From: Corliss Samaniego [mailto:rydersv1@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 8, 2022 5:51 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Supporting the IRLJ Proposal

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My name is Corliss Samaniego; I work for a non-profit group that offers free service to assist low-income drivers. We are a community partner with the King County District Court Relicensing Program. We have more than 20 years' experience assisting drivers with suspended licenses due to unpaid traffic fines.

Good afternoon; amongst this pandemic, I hope all are hanging in there.

My clients come to me with old and new debt for traffic citations, often not knowing where to start. Unfortunately; many continue to drive as they need to get to work, day care for children, grocery shopping etc. It becomes a vicious cycle and they get deeper in debt.

Most of my clients are from lower income homes and living from paycheck to paycheck; For many people; dependable transportation is essential for work, therefore a valid driver's license is required. For low-wage workers and people living in poverty, losing a driver's license could mean losing a job.

Most people would be willing to make a reasonable payment plan for a traffic citation if they knew they were able to do so but the citation says "pay now!" So they ignore it because they don't have the money, hence "driving while poor."

If a person has to appear in court for missing a payment; more than likely, they will not appear because it means missing work and not having enough money to pay for necessities. Many times they just didn't have enough money that month. I would think that this would add many extra hours to courts that are already on overload.

I am in full support of the IRLJ Proposal, below are three (3) important issues for my clients;

- To make the new legislation apply fairly, uniformly and in a way that serves Washington residents, courts should have guidance about how to decide if a person cannot pay a traffic ticket and what is a realistic payment plan.

Using GR 34 to determine if a person can pay and limiting to monthly payments of **\$10.00** provides that guidance.

- Court processes can be confusing and **time-consuming** to figure out. Courts are well situated to give information to drivers about how to get on a payment plan. Busy drivers should not have to search for that information.

- Attendance at hearings can be difficult to impossible for people with jobs, school, or childcare responsibilities.

Limiting hearings and allowing **remote appearances** would be very help.

Respectfully,
Corliss Samaniego, Coordinator
Relicensing Program