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To: [Martinez, Jacquelynn](#)
Subject: FW: Reducing caseload of public defenders
Date: Friday, July 19, 2024 8:58:18 AM

From: Beth Gibson <gibsonb74@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, July 19, 2024 8:55 AM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Reducing caseload of public defenders

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While I understand the reason for it, I fear that crimes will continue to increase. A recent article stated how criminals arrested are being let out because they can't be held without an attorney being assigned. This lets them free to commit more crimes. Perhaps something in this law needs to be changed...it's not that they aren't being represented just that they'll have to wait to be represented, so they can be taken off the street. Of course depending on the crime and the average sentence that could result in some cases of "time served." But crimes can't continue to go unpunished. Criminals know they are likely to get away with it.

Something else to consider. Change the law to allow paralegals to handle certain types of cases. Much like ARNPs and PAs handle some types of medical cases, rather than MDs, the same could be done in legal practice. Since the state law was already changed to where a lawyer doesn't have to pass the bar any more, but apprentice under an attorney, what a paralegal is doing is already under the supervision of an attorney. It's really no different. Along with that you'll need more programs to be set up in the state's community colleges. CBC in Pasco used to have one (which I graduated from), but it has been discontinued. Allowing them to handle some cases would provide a solid career path for paralegals and take the load off the PDs. At minimum more programs need to be set up in community colleges like Pasco, Walla Walla, Moses Lake, Wenatchee, Yakima, Vancouver, etc., because they do the heavy lifting for attorneys and are just as susceptible to burn out. Other than Spokane all of the options are in the Seattle area. This is way too limiting.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Beth Gibson, Paralegal
Kennewick, WA
509-948-8097

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