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Subject: FW: Proposed changes to GR 9 - Standards for Indigent Defense
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From: David Bustamante <dbustamante@grantcountywa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 3:02 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Proposed changes to GR 9 - Standards for Indigent Defense

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I write to object to the proposed rule changes in their current form. While I do agree that complex cases should be weighed differently than less complex cases, I believe that the proposed changes are unrealistic, because many counties cannot attract a sufficient number of qualified attorneys as it is. The result of the new Standards would be to impose an unreasonable burden on smaller counties who cannot handle the caseloads they already have. And to implement the changes all at once would be to invite certain disastrous consequences. I do not feel that the proposed rule changes would allow sufficient time for local governments to make the necessary adjustments to their budgets.

There are many in the defense community who would like to see the state taking over the responsibility for public defense. This would not be the answer. If there are already critical shortages in the numbers of qualified defense attorneys now, why should anyone think that a state takeover would significantly change the situation?

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