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To: [Martinez, Jacquelynn](#)
Subject: FW: Indigent defense
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-----Original Message-----

From: Halspencer <halspencer@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 10:13 AM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Indigent defense

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As a citizen, I think it is incumbent on the Washington Supreme Court to call on the Legislature to ensure every Washingtonian is equal under the law. Most criminal defendants are poor and can't afford a lawyer. Local governments must provide one. But obviously, most local governments lack the funds to provide any more than a fraction of a lawyer. I know defendants who have experienced this. The idea that one lawyer can handle 150 felonies a year defies reality. It's all about the money and the Legislature must step up to help local governments. Here's another point that the whole criminal justice system should be at least thinking about. Why is the system so overburdened in the first place? We over-criminalize and overcharge and over sentence and over incarcerate poor people, nationwide, systemwide. Society really has to think about as a system what we're putting into the system. If localities' public defense systems are over burdened, then they need to take a good hard look at their public safety policies.

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