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**To:** [Martinez, Jacquelynn](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Comment on Proposed Public Defense Standards - CrR3.1/CrRLJ3.1/JuCR9.2  
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**From:** Alvarez, Jessica <[jalvarez@kingcounty.gov](mailto:jalvarez@kingcounty.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 28, 2024 11:03 AM  
**To:** OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <[SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV](mailto:SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV)>  
**Subject:** Comment on Proposed Public Defense Standards - CrR3.1/CrRLJ3.1/JuCR9.2

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Honorable Justices of the Court,

I am writing in support of the adoption of the revised caseload standards for public defenders in the State of Washington.

Funny enough, this email has been sitting in my drafts for over a month. Not because this proposal on the public defense standards is not important to me, but I think it highlights how crushing this work can be. My priority is obviously to my clients. I want to serve them well but honestly I don't even feel that I can do that to my fullest capacity due to the overwhelming amount of clients we serve.

This proposal is not just about me or my fellow colleagues, but it is a proposal for our most vulnerable population. They are the ones that deserve adequate representation. They deserve to have an attorney that can fully invest in their case. I often see clients in-custody get frustrated with their attorney because they want their attorney to work faster. And I know their attorney, myself included, want to address their case as fast as they can, but they so often have several other in-custody clients that need similar attention. That's not even considering the out-of-custody clients. It is depleting. This causes attorneys to burn-out quickly and leads to ineffective assistance of counsel or causes our clients to stay in jail longer than necessary. Our clients deserve their constitutional rights upheld.

This proposal protects constitutional rights, it allows our public defenders to continue to fight the good fight, effectively.

It is sad that when us public defenders go around the office and ask one another how they are doing, the seemingly go-to answer is: "oh, its going". And I know that generally, aside from the high

caseloads, this work is hard. However, whenever I think about the proposal at hand here, I feel a sense of relief – an ability to breathe. I think about how much more attentiveness I can give to my clients. I think about how I can give my in-custody clients more frequent visits, even if it is just to check-in and make sure they're doing okay. I think about how our clients would feel about public defenders. Perhaps the term "public pretenders" would diminish. We all deserve the right to be heard, the right to effective assistance of counsel.

This proposal is about humans beings. We are not only talking about protecting the mental health and physical capability of our public defenders, but the human lives that they serve.

I strongly urge this Court to adopt the proposed changes to the standards so that our clients can truly feel like they matter.

Thank you,

**Jay Alvarez**

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