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Subject: Public defender standards

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For the 18 years I served on the King County Superior Court and especially for the three years I was its Presiding Judge I strongly supported enhanced standards for public defenders. However, I had a number of meetings with those attorneys who served as public defenders for smaller counties and cities and they told me unanimously that without a vehicle for adequate funding the enhanced standards did more harm than good.

Better standards and adequate funding must go hand in hand. Without the funding piece, the standards will not be followed and fewer defendants will be adequately represented.

Thank you.

Hon. Richard F. McDermott (Ret.)  
King County Superior Court