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Good evening,

I write in support of the new caseload standards for public defenders, not only as an employee of the King County Department of Public Defense but also as a Washingtonian concerned with the state's ability to provide quality representation to all.

Beyond improving the quality of work of public defenders and the field as a whole, these necessary changes in caseload standards ensure that clients receive the quality representation they are entitled to. Clients deserve individualized and component representation, which is nearly impossible under the current standards. Providing representation is more than just having a lawyer present at hearings, competent representation requires resources and time that attorneys are not currently afforded. Clients should not have to bear the brunt of the negative impacts of public defenders' caseloads being too high, but they currently are. Only under these improved caseload standards can the state uphold its requirement to provide adequate counsel.

Thank you for your time. I hope the court the Court takes this matter into careful consideration.

Ruby Harlin