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To: [Martinez, Jacquelyn](#)
Subject: FW: Public defender caseloads
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-----Original Message-----

From: Cooper Thomas <cooper.thomas509@gmail.com>
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To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Public defender caseloads

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Dear Justices of the Washington Supreme Court,

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen of Eastern Washington regarding the urgent need for reform in our public defense system, specifically in support of the proposed standards to reduce public defender caseloads. The current situation is not only troubling for those who rely on public defense but also poses a significant risk to the integrity of our justice system as a whole.

In our region, public defenders are often overwhelmed, struggling to manage excessive caseloads that prevent them from providing the quality of representation that every individual is entitled to under the constitution. It is disheartening to see dedicated attorneys stretched thin, forced to divide their attention among far too many cases, and unable to adequately prepare for each one. This not only affects the outcomes for the clients they serve but also undermines public confidence in our legal system.

As a community member, I have witnessed the consequences of inadequate representation firsthand. Individuals facing serious charges and potential life-altering consequences often find that their public defenders lack the time and resources to investigate their cases thoroughly or to mount an effective defense. This leads to unjust outcomes, where the rights of the accused are compromised, and the principles of fairness and justice are called into question.

Moreover, the challenges faced by public defender agencies in Eastern Washington extend beyond the immediate impacts on clients. High caseloads contribute to burnout and turnover among public defenders, diminishing the overall quality and stability of legal representation in our communities. This cycle of overwork and attrition further exacerbates the problem, leaving vulnerable individuals without the advocacy they desperately need.

Reducing public defender caseloads is a crucial step toward ensuring that all residents, regardless of their economic situation, receive competent and compassionate legal representation. It is an investment not only in the lives of those accused but in the broader health of our community and justice system. By establishing reasonable standards, you will help create an environment where public defenders can effectively advocate for their clients and uphold the principles of justice that we all believe in and support.

I urge you to prioritize this issue and support the proposed standards for public defender caseloads. Your leadership in this matter is vital for restoring faith in our justice system and ensuring that every individual has an equitable chance at a fair trial.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I trust that you will consider the needs of the people of Eastern Washington and act in support of meaningful reforms.