

BURBACH & STANSBURY S.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Barbara L. Burbach
bburbach@burbach-stansbury.com
Court Commissioner
Fellow, American Academy
of Matrimonial Lawyers

Carlton D. Stansbury
cstansbury@burbach-stansbury.com
Court Commissioner
Fellow, American Academy
of Matrimonial Lawyers

Carrie L. Watkins
cwatkins@burbach-stansbury.com

10850 West Park Place, Suite 530
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53224
www.burbach-stansbury.com
414/359-9100
414/359-8900 FAX

April 5, 2007

Justices of the Supreme Court
Wisconsin Supreme Court
P.O. Box 1688
Madison, WI 53701-1688

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CLERK OF SUPREME COURT
OF WISCONSIN

Dear Justices:

I am writing this letter in support of the proposed amendments to the Trust Account Rules.

I am a shareholder in a three-lawyer law firm that practices exclusively family law. Our practice covers southeastern Wisconsin, and our clients represent the entire range of economic resources.

The existing trust account rules have had an unfortunate impact on our firm and our clients. Without question, our firm's experience is that we have increased the time commitment for ourselves and our staff with no recognizable benefit to our clients. Many of the problems encountered with the currently existing rules are relieved by the petition currently before the court.

Currently, no person may pay an advance fee to a lawyer in Wisconsin by credit card. Often in a divorce, a client does not have sufficient funds to pay a cash advance. This has a particularly negative effect on domestic violence victims and others who have been denied access to funds in a relationship or marriage. The trust account amendments provide two workable solutions to this problem. For those lawyers who opt to do so, the option of taking credit card advances to the general business account will be available upon approval of this petition. For those lawyers who wish to continue to operate from a trust account, the option of creating a separate account for credit card advances is included in the petition. The revision to the rule will allow more members of the public to have ready access to crucial legal services.

A welcomed component of the petition is the provision that insures that *all* clients of Wisconsin lawyers, regardless of the type of legal services they are seeking, will be assured of reimbursement of their advanced fees in the event of lawyer conversion of unearned advances. The Client Security Fund, which is funded by Wisconsin lawyers, will insure all clients against loss from the acts of a dishonest lawyer.

The petition eliminates the problems in the existing rules which allow clients an infinite period of time to object, in a general way, to the lawyer's fees and by doing so, require a return of the

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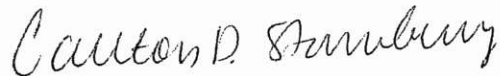
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disputed fee to trust. The petition provides for a 30-day period for the client to object to the fees, and requires that objections be specific. This time period is completely reasonable and provides a welcomed balance between the need for clients to have the opportunity to object and the need of lawyers to have specific information on the objection and closure on their cases.

The current rules require all advanced fees to be deposited into trust and be made subject to billing. The proposed revision eliminates the onerous accounting procedures at the same time clients remain completely protected.

The proposed revisions reflect a tremendous amount of thoughtful consideration by individuals with various interests and experiences. It strikes a realistic and reasonable balance between lawyers' and law firms' interests and the public's interests. The proposed revisions encourage and facilitate access to much needed legal services for all members of the public.

Very truly yours,



Carlton D. Stansbury

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