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April 26, 2018

VIA EMAIL

clerk@wicourts.gov;

carrie.janto@wicourts.gov.

Re: Rule Petition 17-06, In re petition to amend SCR 81.02

To the Wisconsin Supreme Court:

Thank you for accepting public comments on this issue. I am a member of the Wisconsin Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, and I have been a member of the State Bar since 2003. For many years, I accepted private bar appointments from the State Public Defender because I found the work to be meaningful and interesting.

Approximately, three years ago, I withdrew from private bar appointments because financially it makes no business sense for me. My expenses increase every year, but the private bar rate remains stagnant. Based on my hourly overhead expenditures, I would be making less than minimum wage if I continued to take private bar appointments. Furthermore, there were 'drought' periods where, because of budgetary constraints, I would not receive payment for my private bar appointments until months after I had submitted my bill. When I started taking private bar appointments in 2003, I was single and lived in an apartment. Now I am married, and I have four children and a house. My life has changed. I have chosen to pursue and focus in other practice areas in order to support my family despite my interest in criminal defense generally and to be of continued service to the indigent and my community.

I am sure you are well aware that other plumbers, electricians and skilled laborers charge more per hour than the private bar rate. Wages (and expenses) have increased for everyone it seems but private bar attorneys who remain stuck in 1990 or whenever the year was when the private bar rate was lowered to \$40 per hour. If we as a community determine the value of a service based on an hourly rate, routine maintenance or a repair job on a house, for example, seems to be valued more than protecting the rights of those charged with serious crimes and whose lives and those of their dependents could be severely impacted depending on the outcome of their case.

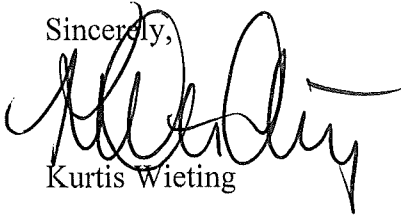
If the rule is adopted as proposed, I would accept private bar appointments again. It would be less than my hourly rate, but the work is meaningful to me and I would still be able to pay my bills. I believe I have something to contribute to the SPD private bar. I have fifteen years of experience. I have maintained my membership with WACDL, I continue to take private pay

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criminal defense cases and I often pursue CLE credits in this area of law. I think a lot of other experienced criminal defense attorneys would feel the same way, too.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kurtis Wieting". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kurtis Wieting