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**DISTRICT I**

September 6, 2023

To:

Hon. Lindsey Canonie Grady  
Circuit Court Judge  
Electronic Notice

Clayton Patrick Kawski  
Electronic Notice

Anna Hodges  
Clerk of Circuit Court  
Milwaukee County Safety Building  
Electronic Notice

Leonard Charles Grant  
Electronic Notice

You are hereby notified that the Court has entered the following opinion and order:

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2021AP2208

Leonard Charles Grant v. Milwaukee County Circuit Court  
(L.C. # 2020CV4658)

Before White, C.J., Donald, P.J., and Dugan, J.

**Summary disposition orders may not be cited in any court of this state as precedent or authority, except for the limited purposes specified in WIS. STAT. RULE 809.23(3).**

Leonard Charles Grant, *pro se*, appeals a judgment of the circuit court denying his petition for name change. Based upon our review of the briefs and record, we conclude at conference that this case is appropriate for summary disposition. *See* WIS. STAT. § 809.21(1) (2021-22).<sup>1</sup> We summarily affirm.

Grant filed a petition for name change asserting that his name as it appears on his birth certificate—in all capital letters—is not in its “proper Christian form.” He sought a name change

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<sup>1</sup> All references to the Wisconsin Statutes are to the 2021-22 version unless otherwise noted.

in the circuit court to reflect the capitalization of only the lead letters in his name. The circuit court found that Grant failed to establish that his petition would result in any name change, and denied the petition. Grant appeals.

This court reviews the circuit court’s dismissal of a petition for name change for an erroneous exercise of discretion. See *Williams v. Racine Cnty. Cir. Ct.*, 197 Wis. 2d 841, 844, 541 N.W.2d 514 (Ct. App. 1995). This discretionary decision “will be upheld if the record shows that ‘there is a reasonable basis for the court’s determination.’” *Id.* (citation omitted).

We agree with the circuit court that Grant fails to establish that granting his petition would result in a name change. Grant provides no evidence or legal authority—and we know of none—that supports his proposition that his name written in all capital letters is legally distinguishable from his name written with only leading capital letters. Furthermore, the fact that Grant’s name appears in all capital letters on some government documents, such as his birth certificate and marriage certificate, simply reflects the format style of such documents; in fact, the circuit court observed that all names appear in this same format on documents issued by the State of Wisconsin. The court found that this was not evidence that his name exists only in all capital letters. Therefore, there was nothing to be changed and, as a result, there was no relief to be granted by the court. We conclude that this was a reasonable basis for the circuit court’s denial of Grant’s petition for name change. See *id.*

Moreover, our supreme court has previously recognized that “an individual in Wisconsin has the common law right to change his or her name through continuous and consistent use.” *State v. Hansford*, 219 Wis. 2d 226, 249, 580 N.W.2d 171 (1998). Therefore, even if the capitalization of Grant’s name could be distinguished from capitalizing only the lead letters, the

use of the latter continuously and consistently could be construed as his proper name under common law. *See id.*

Accordingly, we affirm the circuit court's order denying Grant's petition for name change.

Upon the foregoing,

IT IS ORDERED that the judgment is summarily affirmed. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this summary disposition order will not be published.

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*Samuel A. Christensen*  
*Clerk of Court of Appeals*