



STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN

Leaders in the Law. Advocates for Justice.

March 11, 2015

Wisconsin Supreme Court
110 East Main Street, Suite 215
P.O. Box 1688
Madison, WI 53701-1688

Dear Honorable Justices,

On behalf of the State Bar of Wisconsin, we would like to express the organization's overall support of petition 14-03 and the creation of Wis. Stat. 801.18, related to mandatory electronic filing in circuit courts and conversion to electronic circuit court records.

Many of the provisions of the proposed rule, including the multicounty rollout plan, are valuable recommendations. We took particular notice of the Committee of Chief Judges and the CCAP Steering Committee's assertions that this change will have a direct, positive impact on an attorney's workload, decreasing data entry, paper handling and the money spent on office supplies and delivery charges. Both committees also stress that the changes will increase efficiencies through modifications such as giving attorneys the ability to delegate staff to use their signatures. Additionally, they contend that the rule would extend filing hours to 11:59 p.m., providing attorneys with far more leeway when submitting documents to the court.

In an effort to relay the details of the proposed e-filing rule to our members, we worked with Circuit Court Legal Advisor Marcia Vandercook and Chief Information Officer Jean Bousquet to develop a communication strategy. During the drafting stage, we provided members with a copy of the petition, noting that whatever comments we received would possibly be incorporated into the draft petition. The draft petition was circulated through internal listservs, as well as all three major State Bar publications, *Wisconsin Lawyer*, *InsideTrack* and *Rotunda Report*.

Once comments were solicited and received, the State Bar Executive Committee voted to discuss the petition at the December 2014 Board of Governors' meeting. In addition to Jean Bousquet and Marcia Vandercook, Judges Randy Koschnick and Gerald Ptacek attended the board meeting to provide members with a full review of the petition. Following discussion of the petition at the December meeting, the Board of Governors again reviewed the proposal at its January 2015 meeting and voted unanimously to support the proposed rule.

The board took a broad position of support so that sections, divisions and committees could weigh in separately on issues that pertained to their area of practice.

We know that in order to fully implement mandatory e-filing, the governor would have had to include the court's requested \$2.1 million in the 2015-17 biennial budget. Since the governor did

not include the \$2.1 million request in his executive budget, we understand that the court will continue to consider alternatives to offset this shortfall. As the court seeks a viable financial solution, we encourage the court to ensure the alternatives are equitable to payers and do not unevenly burden attorneys in different practice settings and litigants.

On behalf of the State Bar of Wisconsin, we thank you for the opportunity to share our support of this timely, and ultimately inevitable transition. We commend the Committee of Chief Judges and CCAP Steering Committee for their impressive and diligent work on this rule change, and hope that we can continue to be a useful ally during the months to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,



Robert R. Gagan, President
State Bar of Wisconsin



Ralph M. Cagle, President-
Elect
State Bar of Wisconsin



Patrick J. Fiedler, Past President
State Bar of Wisconsin