

Clerk of Supreme Court  
Attention: Deputy Clerk-Rules  
P.O. Box 1688  
Madison, WI 53701-1688

December 11, 2024

RE: Petition 24-05 Adjustment to Attorney Assessment for Public Interest Legal Services Fund

Dear Chief Justice Ziegler and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court:

My name is Jeff Patzke retired attorney, active in two Wisconsin State Bar Committees, a Wisconsin Law Foundation Fellow, and a Wisconsin's Bar Exam Grader.

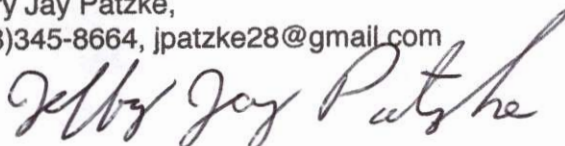
I am also in what very well might be a unique position in that I currently volunteer for Legal Action of Wisconsin and, before we moved, volunteered for Wisconsin Judicare in Wausau, what may be the two largest Legal Aid Societies in Wisconsin. My involvement in the two groups were the result of my attending a WisBar Leadership Conference after I retired. I was motivated to attend primarily because retired Chief Judge of the Wisconsin Court of Appeals, Richard S. Brown, was the Keynote Speaker. I clerked for Judge Brown in District II when I was in Law School and had a great deal of respect for him and the other three Judges in District II at the time, Anderson, Netteshiem, and Scott. Judge Brown's talk, about the historical importance of Lawyers and their greater responsibility to society at large, motivated me to volunteer.

I have had the good fortune, as a result, of working with an amazing and very dedicated group of attorneys who were willing to share their knowledge and experience with me since I often work on legal issues that are new to me. Following their advice, for example, I was able to prevent the eviction of an elderly individual and a family with a young child. I was able to dismiss Federal College Loans for individuals with disabilities who were overwhelmed with mounting debt. There was also a successful unemployment insurance appeal to the Wisconsin Court of Appeals. With Legal Action of Wisconsin (LAW), working out of both the Madison and Milwaukee offices, I now work primarily on Wisconsin Felony Pardons although I occasionally do other side work. I also represented High School Students in what was then Truancy Court at Appleton West High School. The importance of Legal representation in that context was paramount. I could not have done any of this without Judicare's and LAW's assistance!

The declining government revenue sources for Legal Aid Societies has produced attorney and staff layoffs and the inability to serve a significant number of qualified applicants, forcing both Judicare and LAW to make very difficult representation decisions regarding assistance to the growing number of people who very much need legal services but cannot afford them. The expectation is that the situation will only get worse. That is why granting this petition is critical.

I hope the State Bar's Mission statement is more than just words. "We support our members in a dynamic and diverse society in delivering valued professional services, promoting access to justice and pursuing professional satisfaction." The volunteer work I have been fortunate to do has been the most satisfying of my 30 year professional career. I get far more than I give. But the need is great and far too often goes unfulfilled. Please support the dues increase that will help facilitate legal services for those most in need. Thank you for your consideration.

Jeffrey Jay Patzke,  
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**FILED**

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