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CLERK OF SUPREME COURT
OF WISCONSIN

VIA U.S. MAIL AND E-MAIL

Clerk of the Supreme Court
P.O. Box 1688
Madison, WI 53701-1688
Clerk@wicourts.gov

RE: Comment supporting Rule Petition 24-05

Dear Chief Justice and Justices of the Wisconsin Supreme Court,

We write on behalf of Quarles & Brady to express our strong support for the petition to amend Supreme Court Rule 13.045 to increase the Public Interest Legal Services Fund (PILSF) assessment from \$50 to \$100. This increase is essential to maintaining access to civil legal aid for individuals and families with limited financial resources.

Since its establishment in 2005, the PILSF assessment has played a crucial role in ensuring legal representation for Wisconsin's underserved residents. Without access to legal aid, many fundamental civil issues remain unresolved, often with severe consequences. Self-represented individuals navigating the legal system place significant demands on court resources, including staff time and administrative costs, ultimately reducing efficiency. These challenges erode public confidence in the judiciary and underscore the necessity of accessible legal representation.

Due to inflation, over the past 19 years, the value of the \$50 assessment has declined to the equivalent of \$31. To address this gap, we support a phased increase: raising the assessment to \$75 in July 2025 and to \$100 in 2027. These adjustments are essential to sustain civil legal aid services for low-income residents and to uphold the Court's mission of ensuring an efficient and effective judicial system.

This proposed increase aligns with the legal profession's commitment to fairness and accessibility in our judicial system. Enhanced funding will strengthen legal representation for low-income individuals while supporting the integrity and operational efficiency of the courts.

In conclusion, increasing the PILSF assessment is a necessary step to ensure that all Wisconsinites, regardless of income, have access to critical legal representation. We urge the Court to approve the petition to amend Supreme Court Rule 13.045 and raise the PILSF assessment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Michael Aldana, Managing Partner



Dawn Caldart, Pro Bono Director



Emily Feinstein, Madison Pro Bono Partner



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