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In re the Amendment of  
Supreme Court Rule 32.01

PETITION

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The Wisconsin Association of Judicial Court Commissioners and the Wisconsin Family Court Commissioners Association hereby petition the Supreme Court to amend Supreme Court Rule 32.01.

This rule determines the composition of the Judicial Education Committee. The committee consists of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or her designee, the chief judge of the Court of Appeals or his designee, the director of the state courts, eight (8) circuit court judges appointed by the Supreme Court and the deans of the University of Wisconsin and Marquette law schools or their designees.

The Judicial Education Committee oversees continuing education programs for judges. Specifically, the Committee directs the Office of Judicial Education to develop and present educational seminars for Wisconsin's judiciary. The Committee also determines whether to grant education credit for other educational activities undertaken by individual judges and circuit court commissioners. The Committee regulates compliance with the judicial educational requirements set forth in SCR 32.

Wisconsin Supreme Court Rules require that "circuit court commissioners shall maintain and improve professional competence by participating in programs of continuing

education designed for circuit court commissioners ...” SCR 75.05(1). Circuit Court Commissioners must earn 60 education credits each period of six (6) years. SCR 75.05(2). This is the same number of credits as SCR 32 requires for Supreme Court Justices, Court of Appeals Judges and Circuit Court Judges. In addition, full-time circuit court commissioners may **only** earn judicial education credits that have been approved by the Judicial Education Committee. SCR 75(2)(c).

Court commissioners perform a wide range of judicial and quasi-judicial functions in every area of the law. Larger counties rely heavily on court commissioners to process high volume cases. For many citizens, a court commissioner is the only judicial figure they may encounter in court. Every county in the state uses court commissioners in some manner. Continuing judicial education for Circuit Court Commissioners is essential for the efficient operation of Wisconsin’s court system. Although there are approximately 155 full and part-time circuit court commissioners in the state of Wisconsin, court commissioners are not represented on this important committee.

Consequently, the two statewide associations of circuit court commissioners respectfully petition the Supreme Court to amend SCR 32.01 as follows:

A judicial education committee is created consisting of the chief justice of the supreme court or his or her designee, the chief judge of the court of appeals or his or her designee, the director of state courts, 8 circuit judges appointed by the supreme court, **2 circuit court commissioners, with one designated by the Wisconsin Association of Judicial Court Commissioners and one designated by the Wisconsin Family Court Commissioners Association,** and the deans of the University of Wisconsin and Marquette law schools or their designees. The circuit judge members **and circuit court commissioners** shall serve staggered

2-year terms and may serve not more than two successive 2-year terms. The dean of the Wisconsin Judicial College is a member ex officio of the committee and has voting privileges.

Respectfully submitted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2007.

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