

**RECEIVED**

**MAY 01 2018**

May 1, 2018

**CLERK OF SUPREME COURT  
OF WISCONSIN**

Clerk of Supreme Court  
Attention: Deputy Clerk-Rules  
PO Box 1688  
Madison, WI 53701-1688  
Via clerk@wicourts.gov

**Re: Comments for proposed increase for private bar attorneys**



Dear Sir or Madam,

The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin supports increasing the amount paid to private bar attorneys appointed by the Public Defender's office to represent indigent defendants.

207 East Buffalo Street, Suite 325  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
(414) 272-4032  
aclu-wi.org

As I am sure you are aware, Wisconsin's current rate of \$40 per hour is the lowest in the country. This makes it difficult for the State Public Defender to find attorneys willing to take these cases. As a result, some defendants are forced to spend excessive periods of time in jail prior to disposition of their cases, through no fault of their own. These individuals are entitled to effective representation that does not raise the possibility of a conflict of interest – especially a motivation to settle cases quickly and/or without adequate investigation, regardless of the client's wishes – that may arise from the fact that their attorney's costs are not covered by the current rate. Raising the reimbursement rate to \$100 per hour will significantly improve the number of attorneys willing to accept State Public Defender appointments and the quality of their representation, ensuring that poor defendants are able to have access to attorneys with the experience and skills to adequately defend them.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Molly Collins  
Deputy Director  
ACLU of Wisconsin

