

# Waukesha COUNTY

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CLERK OF SUPREME COURT  
OF WISCONSIN

October 15, 2010

Clerk of the Supreme Court  
Attn: Carrie Janto, Deputy Clerk  
PO Box 1688  
Madison, WI 53701

The Honorable Justices of the Wisconsin Supreme Court:

We write to express our concerns with Supreme Court Rule Petition 10-03, which has a public hearing on October 19, 2010. The proposed rule will increase the rate for a court appointed attorney from \$70/hour to \$80/hour as well as authorize an annual increase based on the consumer price index.

In 2009, Waukesha County spent over \$731,000 on legal counsel required per *State v. Dean* and for guardian ad litem appointments ordered by the circuit court. Assuming all these appointments were billed at the current Supreme Court Rule rate of \$70/hour this represents over 10,400 service hours paid by the county. If these same hours were billed at the \$80/hour rate our total expenses for 2009 would have been over \$832,000, an increase of over \$100,000. This extra cost would impose a considerable burden on the Clerk of Courts budget which we simply cannot afford.

In a climate of revenue shortfalls and unfunded mandates imposed by the state, Waukesha County has to manage our responsibilities in the most cost effective and efficient manner. This means making tough decisions that preserve the County's priorities while holding down taxes. Waukesha County cannot support another mandate that would add to our current budget constraints.

For these reasons we respectfully ask that you do not support Supreme Court Rule Petition 10-03. If it is decided the rate will increase, we request that the State provide funding to pick up the additional cost.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

James T. Dwyer  
County Board Chair

Daniel P. Vrakas  
County Executive