
In re the Amendment of
Supreme Court Rule 70.14(1)

PETITION

The Wisconsin Association of Judicial Court Commissioners and the Wisconsin Family Court Commissioner Association hereby petition the Supreme Court to amend Supreme Court Rule 70.14(1).

This rule determines the composition of the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee. The committee's purpose is to advise the Supreme Court and the Director of State Courts on matters relating to "evaluating the administrative structure of the court system, including recommending appropriate changes in the administration and methods of operations of all the courts of the state, the volume and conditions of business in those courts, and advise on the expeditious handling of judicial matters in the future." SCR 70.14(4).

Currently, the committee has representatives from a wide range of participants in the justice system. The committee consists of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and other Justices as the Chief Justice may designate, a court of appeals judge, thirteen (13) circuit court judges, a municipal judge, two (2) representatives from the State Bar, three (3) nonlawyers, a public defender, a court administrator, a prosecutor, and a clerk of court. SCR 70.14(1)(a-j).

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. 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 modify SCR 70.14(1) as follows:

Add (k) two (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.

Respectfully submitted this _____ day of May, 2004.

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