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Superior Representation

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April 2, 2018

Clerk of Supreme Court
Attention: Deputy Clerk-Rules
PO Box 1688
Madison, WI 53701-1688

RE: Rule Petition 17-06, In re petition to amend SCR 81.02

Dear Deputy Clerk,

I write as President of the Ashland-Bayfield Counties Bar Association, and I support the petition to amend SCR 81.02.

Aside from the well-supported evidence set forth in the petition, there is a simple practical reason to increase compensation to attorneys for court-appointed and appointment by State Public Defender cases: we cannot afford not to be compensated more. For those of us in private practice, we need to run a very tight ship. The costs of doing businesses has increased dramatically over the years, yet the pay has not followed suit.

And I believe that I can speak for attorneys in more rural areas when I say that being paid \$25 per hour for travel time is not sustainable for us. When we need to travel at least an hour to get to several counties' courts, it is just simply not worth it.

There is now a push to get more attorneys to practice in rural areas, because the older attorneys there are retiring and are not being replaced with new attorneys. The State Bar of Wisconsin has the Greater Wisconsin Initiative Bus Tour—an attempt to bring attorneys to visit rural areas, in hopes that they will try practicing law in such areas. I believe that rural areas would be much more attractive to practice law were compensation to increase to a much more livable wage.

Finally, I ask the Supreme Court to recall the conversation we had here at lunch when we were honored to have the Justice on Wheels hear cases in the old Bayfield County courthouse. We all walked away with the belief that the Supreme Court supported the increase in compensation. Please help your colleagues in private practice.

Sincerely,

Attorney Vincent S. Kurta