

January 16, 2018

Clerk of the Wisconsin Supreme Court
P.O. Box 1688
Madison, WI 53701-1688



Dear Honorable Justices

I am writing in support of Petition 17-09, filed by the Wisconsin Access to Justice Commission. The Petition requests that the Court increase the fee for Pro Hac Vice admission from \$250 to \$300, with the \$50 increase allocated to the Commission.

As the Executive Director of End Domestic Abuse WI (End Abuse), the statewide coalition representing domestic violence programs and shelters throughout the state, I correspond frequently with advocates and survivors who articulate the many challenges facing victims of domestic violence in the justice system. Upon taking steps to leave and abuser, many survivors become immediately enmeshed in the criminal, civil and family law court systems, and victim advocates report that limited access to legal representation is one of the top barriers facing survivors today. The Access to Justice Commission has been a vital partner in ongoing efforts to address Wisconsin's justice gap for victims of domestic violence.

End Abuse continues to appreciate the Commission's work to expand access to civil justice, and we applaud its actions in both educating policymakers, the public at large, the legal community, and other stakeholders about the role that civil legal aid plays in addressing domestic violence in our state as well as bringing stakeholders together to support and implement practical solutions that ease the burden facing survivors in our court system.

The Commission also led past efforts to preserve and expand funding for civil legal aid in our state, a critical resource for survivors in times of crisis. In 2017, the Commission's engagement and leadership were critical to protecting Congressional funding for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). Additionally, the Commission's hard work and dedication helped to secure a state budget appropriation to address the civil legal needs of low-income survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking.

If we are to continue to make progress in addressing the legal barriers facing survivors in our state, the Commission must have the funds necessary to remain operational. I urge the Court to authorize the requested increase. Should you have any additional questions, please contact Chase Tarrier, End Abuse Public Policy Coordinator at chaset@endabusewi.org or 608.237.3985.

Respectfully,

Patti Seger
Executive Director
End Domestic Abuse WI