



May 20, 2019

Clerk of the Supreme Court  
P.O. Box 1688  
110 East Main Street, Suite 215  
Madison, WI 53701

RE: Petition 19-16 to Amend Wis. Stat. Chapter 802

Dear Honorable Justices:

I am writing in support of Petition 19-16 filed by Quarles & Brady LLP. The Petition requests that the Court amend the Rules of Civil Procedure to eliminate the requirement, imposed by a 2018 amendment to Wis. Stat. § 802.05(2m), that an attorney drafting a pleading, motion or document to be filed by an otherwise unrepresented person disclose his or her name and bar number on the document. This requirement impairs the goal of providing *pro bono* limited scope legal representation to indigent litigants in a legal clinic setting.

The 2018 amendment is problematic in several respects. Attorneys providing *pro bono* services are concerned that disclosing their names and bar numbers on documents drafted in a brief legal advice clinic setting will create future appearances of conflicts of interest in their private practices. Such attorneys are also concerned that clients might make edits to documents after they are drafted and before they are filed with the court.

Because I have engaged in *pro bono* work throughout my career, and much of that work has been in brief legal advice clinic settings, I know these concerns are real, and that they deter attorneys from providing *pro bono* services in such settings. Legal services are expensive and the clients I have served at *pro bono* clinics rely on limited scope representation to access justice. Without it, parties often go wholly unrepresented through the legal process, causing delay, confusion, and inefficiency in the court system.

The version of the rule in effect prior to the 2018 amendment gave attorneys the freedom to provide *pro bono* assistance in brief legal advice clinics without managing a *pro bono* caseload outside of the clinic setting. I hope the rule will be restored to eliminate impediments to attorneys who wish to perform this valuable public service. Our low-income community members need it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles H. Barr".

Charles H. Barr  
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