



February 19, 2021

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

RE: Petition 20-09

Dear Honorable Justices,

As a member of the law enforcement community I would like to offer my support to the changes outlined in Petition 20-09 which would allow for Videoconferencing Technology for judicial hearings.

Due to the pandemic society as a whole has come to accept video technology as a standard method of communication. The timing is right for the court system to be able to use technology to improve efficiencies to the legal system as a whole, not just law enforcement. I believe the following benefits would be achieved:

- Attorneys and the courts would be able to participate in hearings more efficiently. Attorneys often times represent clients in different counties. The drive time to each hearing reduces their available time and how many clients they can serve.
- Defendants will likely have better representation in a more timely fashion. Many of the rural counties in the State are experiencing shortages of attorneys which increases the time of incarceration for a defendant prior to a hearing.
- Witness availability (including police officers) will improve, reducing the need to reschedule and/or postpone hearings. For example, an officer that may have been unavailable to testify in person due to a training commitment would likely be able to testify remotely.
- A reduced cost for law enforcement. In the case of the Menasha Police Department being on the north end of the county our officers have just under a 30 minute commute to the county courthouse. By allowing for video testimony we would save up to an hour of overtime for each hearing in drive time. This could save our agency alone a few thousand dollars per year. Other agencies in the State could also realize savings similar savings.
- An officer who is on duty would be able to testify locally, reducing the time away from their daily job duties. This efficiency would provide better law enforcement services to the community.

I believe the benefits of the petition are many and appreciate the Court's willingness to look at this option. Thank you for your time and consideration of this petition.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Styka
Chief of Police