



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

3060 Willamette Drive NE
Lacey, WA 98516
360-486-2380 (Phone)
360-486-2381 (Fax)
www.waspc.org

Friday, April 29, 2022

Chief Justice Steven Gonzalez and Supreme Court Justices
Temple of Justice
PO Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

SENT VIA EMAIL ONLY

RE: May 3rd Implementation of Amendments to GR31 and CrR 2.1

Honorable Chief Justice Gonzalez and Justices of the Supreme Court,

I write today respectfully requesting that the Court order a pause on implementation of recent changes to GR31 and CrR2.1 *prior to* May 3rd.

As the Court is aware, a broad coalition of criminal justice stakeholders have identified significant consequences of these adopted rule changes, and has written the Court requesting a delay in implementation of these rule changes, giving the Court an opportunity to consider alternatives to the adopted rule changes.

We appreciate the Court's intention to discuss these issues on May 3, however we have concern over the timing. As it stands, the rule changes will have already taken effect by the time the Court considers a request to delay implementation during its May 3 hearing.

We are aware the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (WAPA) recently communicated to the Court that it is their "strong recommendation" that prosecutors "not file any new juvenile cases, pleadings, or documents on the morning of May 3rd that may fall under this rule" due to the previously identified issues. We believe that the prosecutors have made a very concerning, yet rational, recommendation under the circumstances.

Unless the Court pauses implementation of these rule changes *prior to* May 3, very real and preventable public safety harms are likely. WAPA's reference to not filing "new juvenile cases, pleadings, or documents" means not filing criminal charges for violent juvenile offenses, not seeking domestic violence protection orders, sexual assault protection orders, and extreme risk protection orders, as well as other potential lapses in criminal procedure to serve public safety.

The Court must be aware that juveniles can and do commit dangerous and violent offenses, and we believe strongly that the Court must take action *prior to* May 3 to prevent these predictable and preventable public safety harms.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven D. Strachan
Executive Director