

RESOLUTION OF THE
SPOKANE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGARDING A THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
IN THE SPOKANE SUPERIOR COURT

WHEREAS, the Washington State Legislature approved the creation of a thirteenth Superior Court Judge effective 1997 with a starting date upon request of the Superior Court (RCW 2.08.061); and

WHEREAS, the Superior Court has in fact requested creating the thirteenth Superior Court Judge; and

WHEREAS, the population of Spokane County has grown by 143,000 since 1997 and continues to grow at a rate of 1.25% a year; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement staffing with the attendant criminal filings continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 Superior Court case filings exceeded 17,000 new matters, and filings are once again on the rise after the end of the COVID shutdown; and

WHEREAS, as of 2021 there were 7,132 Superior Court filed cases that have been pending between 4 and 24 months (43% Civil, 30% Criminal and 27% Family Law); and

WHEREAS, the total pending caseload has increased by 78.5% in the last twenty-one years; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane Superior Court Presiding Judge and its Court Administrator have provided AOC caseload statistics to the Spokane County Board of Commissioners demonstrating that Spokane Superior Court needs four additional judges; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane Superior Court has demonstrated that it is an excellent steward of community resources and that it has diligently and creatively sought efficiencies with the limited resources already allocated to it; and

WHEREAS, civil litigants have still been unable to timely access the Superior Courts for resolution of their cases which has resulted in the expense of hiring private arbitrators, judges and mediators; and

WHEREAS, criminal defendants are not able to timely have their cases heard within judicial time limits causing excessive pre-trial time in jail or on bond; and

WHEREAS, family law matters languishing has a negative impact on families and children in a time of great personal stress; and

WHEREAS, as lawyers subject to the Rules of Professional Conduct, we acknowledge our role as guardians of the rule of law with a special responsibility for the quality of justice; and

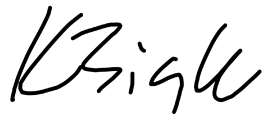
WHEREAS, as lawyers subject to the Rules of Professional Conduct, we are obliged to be prompt in our actions on behalf of our clients, which are dependent on a fully functioning judiciary capable of handling the case load required to meet the dispute resolution needs of the community; and

WHEREAS it is the Mission of the Spokane County Bar Association to enhance the integrity and competence of the legal community, and to pursue greater access to justice for all county residents; and

WHEREAS, access to justice has been and continues to be denied to many citizens of Spokane County proving that Justice Delayed is Justice Denied;

Now therefore by Vote of the Board of Trustees of Spokane County Bar Association on September 21, 2022, it is Resolved that:

Spokane County Bar Association calls upon the Spokane County Board of Commissioners to immediately adopt and document such action as necessary to establish the 13th Superior Court Judgeship; make available adequate temporary Courtroom/chambers with necessary support for such judge; move expeditiously to establish permanent appropriate judicial courtroom needs; and work harmoniously with the Superior Court to meet the judicial needs of the County now and in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Zigler", written in a cursive style.

Kenneth R. Zigler, President