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Sentencing Guidelines Commission LFO Work Group
c/o Judge Catherine Shaffer
King County Superior Court
516 Third Avenue, MS 205
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Judge Shaffer:

Judge Theresa Doyle forwarded your request for support of the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) legal financial obligation (LFO) recommendations of the Sentencing Guidelines Commission's LFO Workgroup. The Minority and Justice Commission met on Friday, June 29, 2018 and considered the request.

We are pleased to support any initiative that will explore updating the SRA with LFO changes and reforms in mind. We are especially pleased that you included a requirement that there be a showing of "ability to pay" before a warrant is issued and the elimination of the DNA fee. Frankly, we hope the practice of issuing warrants for failure to pay any LFO is for the most part rare, given our Supreme Court's decisions and the Legislature's expressed policies on such practices.

Members of our Commission actively supported ESSHB 1783 as a first step in genuine LFO reform. However, we still have concerns about how restitution is prioritized for payout; we would prefer that the victim penalty assessment take priority over subrogated insurers, and we remain concerned about the interest rate. Notwithstanding these concerns, we applaud the concrete steps taken towards reducing monetary sanctions and the discussion that has ensued.

Thank you for looking at LFO reform as part of your review of the SRA. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any particular questions or concerns regarding our discussion.

Sincerely,

Mary Yu

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