

**Carrie Janto - Petition No. 17-06**

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**Subject:** Petition No. 17-06

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CLERK OF SUPREME COURT  
OF WISCONSIN

To the justices of the Wisconsin Supreme Court:

It's very sad that many competent and experienced criminal defense attorneys don't take SPD appointments because of the abysmally low rate of pay. It's very sad that I take only a few SPD cases, and that fact makes me feel guilty. It's very sad that a grandmother hired me a little over a year ago to represent her grandson in an armed robbery case in Marathon County after it took the SPD 17 days to appoint an attorney from Milwaukee to handle the case, and the attorney had not yet talked to the client for 20 days after the appointment. It's very sad that some of the SPD cases I have taken in the last year were after the prosecutor asked me to take the cases because they were concerned that the defendants had not been well represented by the SPD private bar appointed attorneys they had just discharged.

I was recently quoted in a local paper saying that I don't think the Legislature gives a darn (I used coarser language.) about indigent defense. While one of my local legislators called me in response to that article and said he would talk to Governor Scott Walker about raising the private bar rate to \$60 an hour or \$70 an hour, I've seen no movement on that level, and I don't think the governor gives a darn about indigent defense either. I assume one Wisconsin Supreme Court justice doesn't give a darn about indigent defense because campaign ads in support of him blatantly insulted all criminal defense attorneys. I hope the justices who consider Petition No. 17-06 do give a darn about indigent defense and will do something about our embarrassing SPD rates, because if you don't, nothing will change, and that would be very sad. Thank you.

Respectfully yours,  
Richard M. Lawson

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