

Public Defender Representative's Recommendations on Deadline Extensions

From: Jennifer Harjo

To: Forrest D. Bridges, John McCabe, Wade Harrison, Patrick Weede, JD Keister, Vernon Sumwalt, David Hensen

Cc: Julius Corpening

Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2020 9:06 AM

Subject: Re: Deadline Extensions

Dear Judge Bridges,

Private attorneys are overwhelmingly concerned about a jump to business as usual on June 1st. The preference is for a graduated resumption of activity and graduated deadlines. Naturally, the request is for clarity over filing deadlines but since many attorneys handle various types of cases, the need for staggering deadlines is important to them.

While not directly pertinent to the filing deadline question, the pervasive concern is that lawyers do not wish to conduct jury trials while there is a health risk to everyone in the courtroom. Lawyers must have close and intimate communications with clients in preparation and during trial and are unable to do so wearing masks or sitting at a distance from their client.

Of course, defense lawyers have the additional hurdle of having incarcerated clients, adding another health risk factor to the equation. I'm sure some of the same concerns exist with attorneys representing the elderly.

Thank you and I am happy to provide more information at our meeting or in writing.

Jennifer Harjo

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