

Supreme Court Clerk's Office - Keller, Heather

From: Marcy Branham <mfbranham@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 22, 2016 1:50 PM
To: (SUP) Clerk of Court Office
Subject: Water Protectors

Dear Ms. Miller:

I am writing to urge the Supreme Court Justices to please allow out-of-state attorneys to represent those water protectors who were charged with a variety of trespass and resistance crimes while protesting the DAPL.

First, this could greatly lighten the budgetary load of North Dakota and Morton County.

Second, many of these activists already have attorneys with whom they have a relationship of trust and who can better communicate with the defendants.

Third, There is an undue burden on Morton County and North Dakota to provide qualified assistance of counsel to so many defendants. The sheer numbers of the defendants would seem to require unusual measures.

I have read that many of the Morton County and other North Dakota public defenders and other North Dakota licensed attorneys representing the defendants in these actions are not greatly sympathetic to the protestors cause. However, this is a national and even world-wide issue. This protest has garnered world-wide attention because it is such a volatile issue, both as a violation of treaty law and as an environmental issue. Most Americans understand they have a right to object when treaty law has been violated. Political protest is one of the most fundamental of rights throughout the history of the United States. They were not engaging in any type of damage, but simply letting their voices be heard in the time honored way of political protest since our inception.

Thanks you for your attention to this matter.

Marcy Branham
Licensed attorney in Colorado and New Mexico