

DECEMBER 23, 2016

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

Supreme Court Clerk's Office - Harrison, Beth

From: Supreme Court Clerk's Office - Harrison, Beth
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 10:40 AM
To: Miller, Penny
Subject: FW: Legal Rights Services for the Standing Rock water protectors

From: Elizabeth Carlson [<mailto:elizabethjane.carlson@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 9:01 AM
To: (SUP) Clerk of Court Office
Subject: Legal Rights Services for the Standing Rock water protectors

Dear Ms. Penny Miller:

Please accept this comment pursuant to the Supreme Court's decision allowing public comment on a request to admit *en masse* out-of state licensed attorneys to represent defendants accused of crimes in connection with the non-violent civil disobedience protests by the Standing Rock Sioux of North Dakota along with allies from 150 other tribes throughout the United States.

I am a Minnesota licensed attorney with 25 years public interest experience. I want to help out with representing defendants. On December 19, 2016, I called or put calls into the offices of the following North Dakota licensed attorneys: Vance Gillette, Dean Pontis, Tom Disselhorst, Tom Dickson, Chad Nodland and Bruce Ellison. I was seeking a referral for an attorney I could affiliate with so I could obtain admission *pro hac vice* to the North Dakota bar. I was informed that the private bar is so swamped that no one has the resources even just for affiliation.

While I don't know about precedent in mass arrest circumstances for mass admission, there is precedent for the mass admission of newly admitted attorneys. Key to this process is the vetting of attorney applicants by the state licensing or professional responsibility board. Perhaps the legal rights organizations already in place could serve a vetting purpose and look into the qualifications of each applicant for admission. I believe this would alleviate a potential strain on your resources to process the hundreds of lawyers needed to handle the mass arrest prosecutions.

The whole world is watching North Dakota in connection with Standing Rock, the Dakota Access Pipeline, the protests, and now the adjudication of the water protectors. We can show the rest of the world how a free and just democracy really works if we can guarantee adequate legal representation for each and every Standing Rock defendant through a mass admission process.

Thank you for your kind consideration of these views.

Very truly yours,
Elizabeth Carlson
Minn. A.R.N. 0233316

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