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Dear Honorable Supreme Court Justices of North Dakota

Letter in Opposition to Petition to Terminate Special Provisions of Legal Services by  
Qualified Attorneys from Outside North Dakota

I am an attorney licensed in Illinois and New Mexico and since January as a pro hac attorney under the relaxed Supreme Court Rules. Between September 2016 and the present I have made ten trips to North Dakota, spoken to hundreds of protesters after their arrests and maintained contact with many of them. I have appeared on behalf of a defendant facing a felony in the state court, and had his case dismissed and have helped many more obtain representation. I am on the Board of the Water Protector Legal Collective.

I have been practicing law for 50 years including defending protesters in many mass arrest situations. In every other case the arrests occurred in large metropolitan areas where there were many qualified attorneys practicing criminal law. However, as you are well aware, the local bar in Mandan/Bismarck was unable to handle the addition of over 800 criminal cases without assistance from outside.

Since the Oceti Sakewin Camp closed, I have spoken to scores of arrestees and have communicated by phone and email with many more. While some of the defendants in the criminal cases were able to obtain competent, concerned, and diligent local attorneys many were not and many still need representation. I personally have received over 25 calls from arrestees, who have not been appointed counsel although indigent or were dissatisfied with their local appointed counsel. In every case I have been able to submit their names to our staff attorneys who have found pro hac lawyers to represent them. All have been more than pleased with their representation. I have never heard of a situation where an out of state attorney failed to appear for a designated court date and certainly never heard of a situation where a failure to appear inconvenienced the court or the prosecution as was alleged in the Petition.

The Pro Hac program has filled the gap with competent, experienced, and enthusiastic out of state lawyers representing arrestees in hundreds of cases. Nevertheless I am still getting calls from people whose cases have now been given trial dates and who want counsel or new counsel to represent them. Local lawyers calendars are filled up and many of the callers are indigent. The only choice for

these arrestees is to get a lawyer from the pro hac program and this is what they are still currently doing.

I urge you to **deny** the pending petition to terminate the very successful pro hac program, and allow the program to continue until current arrestees from the protest have their cases completed or at least until all have found effective counsel satisfactory to them. This will not happen for many if the program is terminated before this.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeffrey Haas".

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