

# STATE OF INDIANA



Norman Lefstein, Chairman  
Indianapolis

Senator Joseph C. Zakas  
Granger

Susan Carpenter  
Indianapolis

Hon. Daniel F. Donahue  
Clark Circuit Court

Les Duvall  
Indianapolis

Representative Ralph M. Foley  
Martinsville

Monica Foster  
Indianapolis

Bettye Lou Jerrel  
Evansville

Senator Timothy S. Lanane  
Anderson

Rebecca S. McClure  
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Representative Bob Kuzman  
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## PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION

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June 30, 2006

Honorable Randall T. Shepard  
Chief Justice  
Indiana Supreme Court  
State House, Suite 304  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2798

Dear Chief Justice Shepard:

I want to thank you for meeting yesterday with Les Duvall, Larry Landis, and me to discuss Indiana's indigent defense system. As you know, the Public Defender Commission is committed to improving the state's defense program, and we believe the time is past due to conduct a close, in depth examination of how defense services are being delivered in the state. While the establishment in 1989 of the Public Defender Commission was an important step forward, we also know that there are significant indigent defense problems in Indiana, both in terms of structure and the overall level of defense expenditures.

The model of a "Task Force" or "Study Commission" on the "Future of Indigent Defense in Indiana," appointed by the Chief Justice, with responsibility for reporting its findings and recommendations to the Chief Justice, would be an extremely positive development and consistent with the course charted in a number of other states. In forming such a group, the Public Defender Commission would be pleased to share with you its suggestions for membership.

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On the other hand, if you decide not to appoint the sort of broad-based task force or study commission that we propose, the Public Defender Commission will proceed to do so, consistent with the resolution that we passed during our last meeting. And, of course, the Commission will share with you its findings and recommendations. I would be grateful if you could advise me by early September of your decision respecting this matter so that I can report your decision to the Commission during our mid-September meeting.

As for the sum needed for the Public Defense Fund for fiscal years 2008 and 2009, either Mike Murphy or I soon will send to you the amount that we believe should be requested.

Again, we thank you for meeting with us. We enjoyed the conversation and appreciate your commitment to the cause of indigent defense in Indiana.

Sincerely,

Norman Lefstein  
Chairman

xc: Les Duvall  
Larry A. Landis