



BRANCH OFFICE
Veterans Memorial Courthouse
Lansing, MI 48933
inghamclerk@ingham.org
www.ingham.org

Barb Byrum
Ingham County Clerk

MAIN OFFICE
P.O. Box 179
341 South Jefferson
Mason, MI 48854
Phone: (517) 676-7201
Fax: (517) 676-7254

May 21, 2019

Michigan Supreme Court
Post Office Box 30052
Lansing, Michigan 48909

RE: ADM File No. 2018-30 – Proposed Amendment of Rule 8.115 of the Michigan Court Rules

Dear Sir or Madam:

I respectfully recommend that the Michigan Supreme Court not adopt the Proposed Amendment of Rule 8.115 of the Michigan Court Rules.

As Clerk of the Ingham County Circuit Court (30th Judicial Circuit), I have concerns with permitting the taking of pictures of documents filed in Circuit Court files. Specifically, this could result in easier release of confidential/non-public information. Further, this may result in pictures being taken rather than certified copies being purchased, resulting in a loss of revenue.

Also, as an individual familiar with hearing impairments, I find the requirement of portable electronic devices being turned off, while present in a courtroom to be completely out-of-touch with the special needs' communities. For example, a hearing aid is often controlled by a smartphone application ("app") from which ambient noise may be filtered out, volume may be increased, et cetera. Being able to hear is fundamental to a juror's ability to serve in the role the Court places them. The counter argument that the juror could ask for an accommodation from a judge is also unacceptable, as then the juror would then be singled out because of their disability.

Finally, I respectfully request County Clerks be involved if they are not, already, in the drafting of amendments and policies that touch on Circuit Court Clerk's Offices as we, as Clerks of the Circuit Courts, could provide helpful feedback, resulting in better policies and procedures.

For the reasons above, I respectfully recommend against adoption.

Please feel free to contact me if I may ever be of assistance.

Sincerely,


Barb Byrum, JD, CERA
Ingham County Clerk