



Proclamation

Recognition of Public Defenders' and Public Defender Professionals' Essential Role in Building Effective Criminal Justice Systems

This proclamation affirms both the legal principle and practical value of equal access to justice for every individual regardless of income

Whereas, The 6th Amendment of the United States Constitution was introduced in 1789 as part of the Bill of Rights; it guarantees those accused of crimes the right to a speedy and public trial, an impartial jury, to be informed of the accusation they face, to confront witnesses and have the assistance of defense counsel; and

Whereas, California was the first state to establish and publicly fund a Public Defenders office in 1914, and later expanded it as a state authorized institution in 1921; and

Whereas, Clarence Earl Gideon was charged with breaking into a Florida poolroom on June 3, 1961 and stealing coins from a cigarette machine. He asserted his innocence.

Whereas, Gideon submitted a handwritten petition to the United States Supreme Court from his prison cell, arguing that the United States Constitution does not allow poor people to be convicted and sent to prison without legal representation.

Whereas, on March 18, 1963, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that Gideon's trial and conviction without the assistance of an attorney was fundamentally unfair and violated the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. It is an "obvious truth," the Court stated, that "in our adversary system of criminal justice, any person hauled into court, who is too poor to hire a lawyer, cannot be assured a fair trial unless counsel is provided for him."

Whereas, at his retrial on August 5, 1964, with the Constitutionally-guaranteed assistance of an attorney, Clarence Earl Gideon was found innocent of the charges against him.

Therefore be it Resolved, March 18-20, 2023 as Public Defense Week in Warren County and commend our public attorneys who continue to fulfill the Constitutional promise of the Bill of Rights.

ADOPTED, this 22th day of February 2023.

COMMISSIONERS OF WARREN COUNTY

Handwritten signature of Tricia D. Durbin in cursive.

Tricia D. Durbin
Chair

Handwritten signature of Benjamin Kafferlin in cursive.

Benjamin Kafferlin
Vice Chair

Handwritten signature of Jeff Eggleston in cursive.

Jeff Eggleston
Commissioner

Attest:

Handwritten signature of Pamela J. Matve in cursive.

Pamela J. Matve
Chief Clerk

