

August 29, 2005

Thomas D. Hall  
Clerk  
Supreme Court of Florida  
500 South Duval Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Mr. Hall:

As the Executive Director of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the organization that supports and represents Florida's 41 certified domestic violence centers, I write in support of Judge Robert L. Doyel's proposed changes to Rule 3.131 of the Florida Rules of Criminal Procedure (attached).

Judge Doyel's proposed changes, as stated in Attachment A, address several critical issues affecting domestic violence victims throughout the state. Most importantly, domestic violence is much more likely to escalate to homicide when the batterer has access to firearms. In fact, domestic violence assaults with firearms are 12 times more likely to result in death than domestic violence assaults without firearms. (Saltzman, JAMA, 267(22): 3042-3047 (1992)).

Currently, there is no uniform criminal no-contact order used throughout the state. Similarly, there is no uniform order requiring relinquishment of firearms in criminal cases. By providing a uniform statewide criminal order addressing the no-contact and firearms provisions, the requirements of 18 U.S.C. s.2265 will be met and therefore the orders will be accorded Full Faith and Credit by the courts of other states.

FCADV strongly urges the Court to adopt the proposed amendments stated in Attachment A. Thank you so much for your assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Carr  
Executive Director

Attachment