

Editor, The Times:

As a Washington family law attorney, I agree with the Supreme Court's decision highlighted in your recent article ["Supreme Court rules against rights to an attorney in divorce/custody case," Dec. 7]. I believe the costs of providing free legal counsel to all family law litigants who can't afford counsel would be prohibitive, and the unintended consequences potentially horrifying.

In reality, resources currently exist to assist pro se family law litigants, such as superior court advocates, law student programs, non-profit pro bono groups, and the CASA program. Unfortunately, these resources are not optimally available or utilized in that special advocates are not always trained well, and CASA, law schools, and non-profits are limited by financial constraints. If government, the legal profession, philanthropists, and other stakeholders invested time and money in enhancing and improving the resources that already exist, much more could be done at a comparatively low cost to assist those truly in need of no-cost or low cost legal assistance.

It makes more sense to promote practical solutions instead of expending valuable time and resources – as was certainly the situation in the King case – to chase an idea that will never see the light of day.

Sands McKinley
McKinley Irvin
425 Pike Street, Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98101
206-625-9600