

Legal aid study finds: No lawyer, no win

(AP) A study by a legal aid group found that Virginia residents forced to defend themselves in civil lawsuits are at a huge disadvantage.

John Whitfield, executive director of Blue Ridge Legal Services, presented the findings April 4 to the Virginia Supreme Court.

The Daily Press [reported](#) that at the general district court level, civil defendants are represented by a lawyer in only two percent of cases. Plaintiffs, meanwhile, have lawyers more than half of the time.

When plaintiffs with lawyers face defendants representing themselves they win 60 percent of the time. Many plaintiffs are landlords, loan companies and hospitals.

But when defendants have a lawyer on their side, plaintiffs win only 20 percent of their cases.

The study recommends relaxing procedural rules for pro bono defendants and encouraging lawyers to donate more legal hours. [READ MORE](#)

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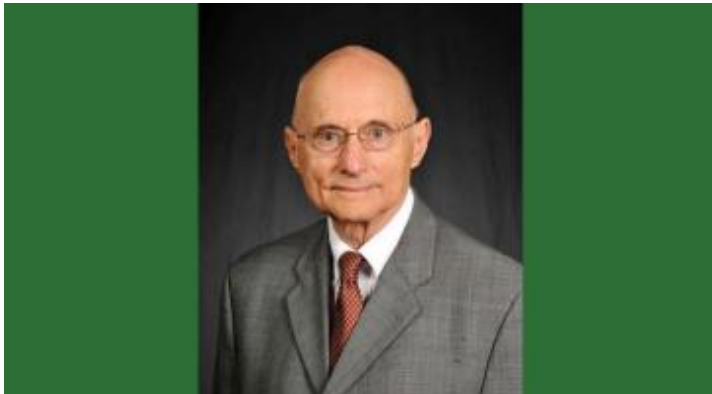


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