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**Supreme Court to Hear *Timbs v. Indiana*, Groundbreaking Case Challenging Constitutionality of Justice System Fines**

*Juvenile Law Center, other advocates join amicus effort to highlight harm and impact of juvenile costs, fines and fees*

**Washington, DC** (November 28, 2018): Today the Supreme Court of the United States of America will hear *Timbs v. Indiana*, a case concerning the constitutionality of excessive fines and fees by local and state governments. Juvenile Law Center led an [amicus effort](#) to educate the Court on how exorbitant fines and fees in the juvenile justice system affect youth and their families. Forty other youth advocacy organizations joined the Center's amicus effort.

"Across the country, youth are pushed into the justice system and even into correctional settings because they can't afford fines and fees," said Jessica Feierman, Senior Managing Director of Juvenile Law Center. "Our brief urged the Court to recognize that the Constitution protects against these harmful and excessive sanctions."

At the center of the case is Tyson Timbs, whose 2012 Land Rover was seized under Indiana's civil asset forfeiture laws. He had purchased the Land Rover with insurance money after this father died and supported a heroin addiction by driving it across Indiana to buy and sell drugs. Under Indiana law, the state may seize any vehicle used in drug trafficking. Civil asset forfeiture, common in many states, has sparked national interest. The case has widespread implications, raising the unresolved question of whether the Eighth Amendment's Excessive Fines Clause applies to state and local authorities. It has attracted amicus briefs from a diverse coalition, including the Cato Institute, American Civil Liberties Union, Southern Poverty Law Center, NAACP, Constitutional Accountability Center, and Pacific Legal Foundation.

"Tyson has paid his debt to society," said Sam Gedge, an attorney with the Institute for Justice, which is representing Mr. Timbs. "He's taken responsibility for what he's done. He's paid fees. He's in drug treatment. He's holding down a job, and he's staying clean. But the State of Indiana wants to take his vehicle, too, and give the proceeds to private lawyers and to the officers who seized it. The Excessive Fines Clause exists to combat precisely these types of abuses."

The Court will hear the case at 10 am EST on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Juvenile Law Center staff are available for comment on the implications for juvenile costs, fines, and fees policy nationwide.

*Juvenile Law Center advocates for rights, dignity, equity and opportunity for youth in the foster care and justice systems. Founded in 1975, Juvenile Law Center is the first non-profit, public interest law firm for children in the country. We fight for youth through litigation, appellate advocacy and submission of amicus (friend-of-the-court) briefs, policy reform, public education, training, consulting, and strategic communications. Widely published and internationally recognized as leaders in the field, Juvenile Law Center has substantially shaped the development of law and policy on behalf of youth. We strive to ensure that laws, policies, and practices affecting youth advance racial and economic equity and are rooted in research, consistent with children's unique developmental characteristics, and reflective of international human rights values. For more information about Juvenile Law Center's work, visit [www.JLC.org](http://www.JLC.org).*

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