

JAN 17 2020

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

LINDA GOUGH,

Petitioner

vs.

BANKERS LIFE AND CASUALTY COMPANY,

Respondent

APPLICATION TO EXTEND TIME TO FILE PETITION FOR WRIT OF  
CERTIORARI

RELIEF SOUGHT

Linda Gough, *pro se* Petitioner, on behalf of herself moves this Court for an order granting an extension of time to file a petition for writ of certiorari in the matter of *Linda Gough v. Bankers Life and Casualty Company*, USCA4 No. 19-1253, for a period of 60 days from the date the writ is due.

GROUND FOR RELIEF

The grounds for this motion are due to extraordinary circumstances detailed below:

1. The Petitioner, Linda Gough, is representing herself as an indigent non-attorney. Gough is requesting relief due to the economic hardship related to the case and delays from the holiday season.
2. The Petitioner, Linda Gough, has struggled to meet her basic needs of food and shelter as a result of the case. On October 4, 2019, the Petitioner wrote her Senator and State Representative in attempt to address this matter.
3. On September 13, 2019, the Petitioner filed an Emergency Motion to Claim Computer with the Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, which was denied. On January 8, 2020, she bought a refurbished computer in an attempt to write and submit the petition for writ of certiorari on time. However, Gough realized during the computer set-up she lost all data from the past 869 days, including case

information for Gough v. Bankers Life. Gough has access to hard copies of the case but she will need time to set-up her new computer and re-type the information.

3. On October 22, 2019, the Petitioner was in a day-long orientation to start a new job, which is the same day she received the electronic notice of the Judgement from the U.S. Court of Appeals for *Gough v. Bankers Life*. The position started November 1, 2019 at Allied Universal for 24 hours a week. This is the first regular paycheck she has received since December 2016, despite applying for jobs as she defended herself in Court. The job is not in her field but securing the position at Allied Universal has provided her the needed stabilization to catch up with bills and will also allow her to pay the costs associated with the presenting the case to the Supreme Court.

4. On October 23, 2019, the Petitioner attended a hearing at the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) representing herself against the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) in an attempt to secure Food Supplement Program (FSP) while living under Federal Poverty Guidelines. The result of the hearing occurred on November 18, 2019, with an order stating an allowable benefit amount. However, soon after the OAH results were received, DHS sent a letter denying benefits after December 2019 as her new job changed her income level, despite Gough living in poverty.

5. On November 5, 2019, the Petitioners phone service was suspended due to non-payment. Gough could not afford to communicate with legal or financial services further delaying her start on the petition for writ of certiorari. On November 21, 2019, she prioritized restoring her phone service with the income from her new job; however, it was not paid in full.

6. October 22, 2019, marked the day that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit Judgement was filed, the day she signed paperwork to start her new job, and was the same day creditors started calling to collect past due debt. The Petitioner used a significant amount of 90-day timeframe to communicate with creditors, government and non-government assistance, legal services, and the financial counselors at her Federal Credit Union. The communication needed from legal and financial services to support her during this time was delayed not only from a suspension of phone service but also due to the holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's.

7. As of today, January 17, 2020, the Petitioner has caught up with past due rent from September 2019. In the fall of 2019, Gough applied for rental assistance from a charitable organization and then negotiated a payment plan with her landlord in

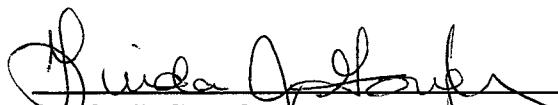
order to maintain her place to live. The time it took to apply for rental assistance and strain on her budget to catch up with past due rent delayed the ability to respond on time.

The economic hardships listed above and the holiday season created a disruption in the Petitioner's ability to communicate and address the matter on time with the Supreme Court. Gough used the past 90 days to secure work that provides: access to a computer and phone; her basic needs of food and shelter; and ability to pay for costs associated with this Court. Petitioners should not be deprived of the opportunity to file the petition for writ of certiorari. The additional 60 days may allow Gough to present the case in a reasonable manner to the Court and an attempt at justice.

#### CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated, Linda Gough, Petitioner, requests that the time for filing the petition for writ of certiorari be extended in this matter to March 20, 2020.

Dated: January 17, 2020



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