

RULE 5. CERTIFICATION OF QUESTIONS OF LAW

(a) Power to Answer. The Supreme Court may answer questions of law certified to it by the Supreme Court of the United States, a Court of Appeals of the United States or of the District of Columbia, a United States District Court, or a United States Bankruptcy Court when requested by the certifying court, if there are involved in any proceeding before those courts questions of law of this state which may be determinative of the cause then pending in the certifying court and as to which it appears to the certifying court there is no controlling precedent in the decisions of the Supreme Court or Court of Appeals of this state.

(b) Method of Invoking. This Rule may be invoked by an order of any of the courts referred to in Rule 5(a) upon the court's own motion or upon the motion of any party to the cause.

(c) Contents of Certification Order. A certification order shall set forth:

- (1) The questions of law to be answered;
- (2) A statement of all facts relevant to the questions certified;
- (3) The nature of the controversy in which the questions arose;
- (4) A designation of the party or parties who will be the appellant(s) and the party or parties who will be the respondent(s) in the Supreme Court;
- (5) The names and addresses of counsel for the appellant and respondent; and
- (6) Any other matters that the certifying court deems relevant to a determination of the questions certified.

(d) Preparation of Certification Order. The certification order shall be prepared by the certifying court, signed by the judge presiding at the hearing, and forwarded to the Supreme Court by the clerk of the certifying court under its official seal. The Supreme Court may require the original or copies of all or of any portion of the record before the certifying court to be filed with the

Commented [DW1]: The NRAP Commission should consider whether to amend this rule to allow for sister states and other jurisdictions to certify questions of law to our Supreme Court, as permitted in Minnesota. See Minn. Stat. § 480.065(3) (“The supreme court of this state may answer a question of law certified to it by a court of the United States or by an appellate court of another state, of a tribe, of Canada or a Canadian province or territory, or of Mexico or a Mexican state, if the answer may be determinative of an issue in pending litigation in the certifying court and there is no controlling appellate decision, constitutional provision or statute of this state.”)

certification order, if, in the opinion of the Supreme Court, the record or portion thereof may be necessary in answering the questions.

(e) Costs of Certification. Fees and costs shall be the same as in civil appeals docketed before the Supreme Court and shall be equally divided between the parties unless otherwise ordered by the certifying court in its order of certification.

(f) Docketing in Supreme Court. Upon receiving the certification order, the clerk of the Supreme Court shall docket the case and notify the clerk of the certifying court, the certifying judge, and the parties that the case has been docketed in the Supreme Court.

(g) Briefs and Argument.

(1) The Supreme Court will consider whether to accept a question certified to it without oral or written argument from the parties unless otherwise directed by the Supreme Court.

(2) If the Supreme Court accepts certification of a question of law, the parties shall brief the certified question of law unless the court orders otherwise. The clerk of the Supreme Court shall notify the parties of the court's decision to accept certification and set a briefing schedule. Briefs and any appendices must be in the form provided in Rules 28, 30, and 32.

(3) If the Supreme Court decides to hear oral argument on the certified question of law, Rule 34 will govern the proceedings.

(h) Opinion. The written opinion of the Supreme Court stating the law governing the questions certified shall be sent by the clerk under the seal of the Supreme Court to the certifying court and to the parties and shall be res judicata as to the parties.