

AG Schimel: Pens summertime letters to voters

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Contact: (262) 528-2086

Explains how his faith, family and life experiences in Wisconsin help guide his decisions as Attorney General

[WAUKESHA COUNTY, WISC...] Wisconsin Attorney General Brad Schimel's campaign is on a roll.

Just this month, the campaign announced it entered the summer with more than \$1 million on hand. Last week, the campaign picked up the endorsements of 63 of Wisconsin's 72 sheriffs, including 12 elected Democratic sheriffs. Now, on Wednesday, Schimel published a letter that provides an in-depth, first-person narrative that explains how his faith, family and life experiences as a Wisconsin prosecutor impact him and help guide the decisions he has made as the head of the Wisconsin Department of Justice.

A Wisconsin prosecutor for nearly 30 years, Brad Schimel's experience is unrivaled in this race. The campaign has taken the unusual step of publishing such a detailed narrative because Schimel's breadth and depth of experience can't be boiled down to mere talking points.

Some excerpts:

On his career as an assistant district attorney

"I did everything there was to do as a prosecutor. I went on to try over 150 more

jury trials—in every type of case a DA's office sees. I was a hands-on type of assistant DA, and took every chance I could to ride with law enforcement and go to crime scenes. Law enforcement knew that they could count on me any time night or day to help out, whether I was officially on call or not."

On working for victims

"...I have a number of those types of keepsakes in my office, and the small gifts I received from crime victims I helped are among my most treasured possessions. I have a small homemade chopper fashioned from bolts welded together that I received from a young man who had developmental disabilities. He was sexually assaulted and physically abused by a co-worker who resented that the employer hired people with disabilities at the company. He had a hard time communicating because of his disabilities, but I worked with him to help him be able to tell the jury what happened, and the defendant was convicted. The young man had seen pictures of my motorcycle in my office, and asked one of his other coworkers to make the little motorcycle for me. That little motorcycle on my credenza at work goes unnoticed by many who come to my office, I'm sure, but I cherish it."

On getting justice for victims of sexual assault

"It was not just child victims we served in the Sensitive Crimes Unit. There were also adult victims of sexual violence. Like with child victims, the services available to adult victims needed improvement. I had an opportunity to work with the team at Waukesha Memorial Hospital to create a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program in Waukesha County. Adult sexual assault victims were being taken to the Sexual Assault Treatment Center in Milwaukee, which like the CATC, was an outstanding, but overwhelmed facility. We decided that the state's third largest county should have its own SANE services, and thanks to the community service-oriented approach at ProHealth Care and some very talented people in our law enforcement and human services teams, we got it done."

"We also created a protocol for the handling of the Sexual Assault Kits that were collected by the SANE Nurses. As a result, when I ran for AG, I knew what to do to tackle our state's 20-year problem of accumulated sexual assault kits that had not been submitted to the Crime Lab for testing. At DOJ, we put in place a process that will resolve that decades-old problem in less than three years. Even more importantly, we developed a statewide protocol that will prevent this from ever happening again."

"By the way, thanks to the protocol we put in place in Waukesha County years ago,

the third largest county only had 39 unsubmitted kits that needed to be tested. Statewide there were over 4,100. At DOJ, I saw the value in constructing a comprehensive, victim-centered plan like we did in Waukesha.”

On addressing law enforcement wellness

“That revelation from Sandi inspired me to launch our first in the nation Law Enforcement Wellness Program at DOJ, which focuses not just on physical fitness, but more importantly on the emotional and psychological impacts of serving in law enforcement. Those cumulative impacts have resulted in law enforcement officers having shorter lifespans, higher divorce rates, and most tragically, we lose 4 times as many officers to suicide as to duty deaths. One of my most important missions is to change this. DOJ requires any conference we sponsor to have a wellness component. We have worked tirelessly to get every police department in the state to provide a full array of services to address officer wellness. We have developed a police chaplain credentialing program that is the only such program in America. I am proud of the great work we are doing to protect and serve those who protect and serve us.”

On his faith

“I respect people of all backgrounds and faiths, including those who choose not to believe in a higher power. My faith isn’t exclusionary. But it is a part of who I am, and I’m not ashamed of it. My Catholic faith guides me to serve others, and to try to be the best person, father, husband and public servant I can be.”

On his family

“Also, my family has been supportive, and without much recognition. There was one time when my wife and daughters did receive a formal recognition... in 2013 when the Schimel family received the Family Service of Waukesha award as Family of the Year. Sandi and I have been married 22 years, and she is my rock. Mackenzie is 17 and Hailey is 15 now, and I am so grateful to the girls for all that they have sacrificed so that I could pursue my calling.”

Schimel concludes his letter, *“I know this note is very long, and a little unorthodox. But I figure if you care enough to come to this site, you are researching your options and deserve to know who I am, what motivates me, and how I go about my job as your Attorney General.”*

To see the entire letter, click [here](#).