

DOJ asks judge to push back deadline for Walker to call special elections

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The state DOJ late Monday asked a Dane County judge to push back the deadline for Gov. Scott Walker to call special elections in two legislative seats.

That would allow time for the Legislature to meet in extraordinary session next week to pass a bill that would render moot the lawsuit seeking to force Walker to order the elections in the 1st SD and 42nd AD, DOJ argued.

The request, if granted, would move the deadline by which Walker must call the special elections to April 6 instead of Thursday. The Assembly and Senate plan to meet April 4 to pass a bill circulated Monday that would remove the provision in state statute requiring special elections to be called “as promptly as possible.”

The bill would also create a new requirement that would mean legislative vacancies occurring after early December of odd-numbered years would not be filled until the regular November election the following year.

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In the DOJ motion, AG Brad Schimel argued an extended timeline would allow the Legislature to pass its legislation before the gov makes a special election call, which he argues would prevent “needless voter confusion.”

If lawmakers do not pass their special election legislation, Schimel said the gov intends to hold elections for the 42nd AD and 1st SD on June 12, regardless of whether he receives a deadline extension. A primary, if needed, would be May 15.

DOJ is asking the court to make a final decision on the relief motion by end of business Tuesday.