

Judge orders Walker to call special elections in 1st SD, 42nd AD

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A Dane County judge today ordered Gov. Scott Walker to call special elections in two legislative seats Republicans held until the incumbents resigned in December to join the administration.

The order, issued through a writ of mandamus, was in response to a lawsuit filed by the National Redistricting Foundation, a group affiliated with former Obama administration AG Eric Holder. Plaintiffs in the case are eight voters from the 1st SD and 42nd AD.

Dane County Judge Josann Reynolds, who Walker appointed to the bench in 2014, directed the gov to issue an order within a week for the special elections in the 1st Senate District, which was held by Frank Lasee, of DePere, and the 42nd AD, which was held by Keith Ripp, of Lodi, before they resigned.

The Walker administration argued it had no legal obligation to order the special elections, and it would be an unnecessary cost because the Legislature planned to finish their work this session before the new lawmakers could be seated.

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Asked if an appeal was planned, DOJ spokesman Johnny Koremenos said, "We are consulting with our client and have no comment at this time."