

Rep. Tusler: Promotes law and order, supports our district attorneys

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Legislature Authorizes Two Assistant DAs for Outagamie County

Madison, WI - This week, Representative Ron Tusler (R - Harrison) and Assembly Republicans reaffirmed their commitment to law and order. On Thursday, the Assembly will vote on a proposal that will create two new assistant district attorney positions for Outagamie County. On Tuesday, the Assembly voted 95-0 for a bill, authored by Rep. Tusler, which will provide needed support for prosecutors across the state.

The proposal up for a vote on Thursday creates 53 new assistant district attorney positions across the state, including two new positions in Outagamie County. Earlier this session, Rep. Tusler advocated for creating more prosecutor positions in Outagamie County in the 2017-19 State Budget. Based on the 2016 District Attorney Office Workload Analysis, Wisconsin prosecutors' offices are approximately 140 attorneys short of what their workload requires. Outagamie County is currently operating at 50% of ideal staffing, and would need 8.8 full-time prosecutors to be fully staffed. Understaffing is a critical issue, given the recent opioid and meth epidemics sweeping the state.

"It is critical that our District Attorneys have the tools they need to adequately prosecute crimes and keep our streets safe," said Rep. Tusler. "These new positions will have a dramatic impact. District Attorney Tempelis and her team can give needed attention to more cases and ensure that criminals do not go unprosecuted."

Outagamie County District Attorney Melinda Tempelis applauded the efforts of Rep. Tusler and the Legislature saying, “I appreciate the commitment to public safety this proposal represents. Additional prosecutors will help ensure our commitment to justice, serve victims of crimes, and allow us to participate in important criminal justice reform.”

The proposal will be voted on by the Assembly on Thursday.

Additionally, the Assembly voted Tuesday night to pass Assembly Bill 231, authored by Rep. Tusler, which would allow district attorneys and prosecutors to more easily collaborate with their colleagues across the state, identify methods and evidence-based practices, promote professional competence, and better prosecute criminals. The bill accomplishes these goals by creating a board comprised of prosecutors from across the state that will also serve as an expert resource for legislators.

“This bill will ensure that our prosecutors and district attorneys have a voice in the Capitol,” said Rep. Tusler. “It is important that the legislature have a resource that can provide helpful information from the front lines of the criminal justice system. This bill will also provide a forum for prosecutors across the state, including DA Tempelis and Calumet County DA Nathan Haberman, to consult with one another and provide useful information to the legislators.”

The bill has widespread support from the law enforcement community and Attorney General Schimel.