

Americans for Prosperity-Wisconsin: Secure public defense now

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MADISON, Wis. – Americans for Prosperity-Wisconsin (AFP-WI) on Tuesday urged the Joint Committee on Finance to address a critical due process issue by increasing the private bar rate as the committee prepares to vote on the State Public Defenders budget. Wisconsin’s reimbursement rate for private attorneys willing to take on defendants the government cannot is one of the lowest in the country, leading to defendants across Wisconsin having to wait far too long for access to a qualified attorney to work on their behalf.

AFP-WI State Director Eric Bott issued the following statement:

“An accused American’s right to counsel, enshrined in the Sixth Amendment, is not optional. Every citizen should have access to the critical protection of a quality lawyer, but Wisconsin’s underfunding of its public defenders deprives many Wisconsinites of this crucial right. Lawmakers should better prioritize spending in order to increase the bar rate and uphold every Wisconsinite’s constitutional right to an attorney.”

Last week, AFP-WI sent a memo to members of the Joint Committee on Finance to urge them to support an increase in the private bar rate. Read the memo [here](#).