

Rep. Edming: Applauds Senate passage of Judgeship Bill

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MADISON - Yesterday, the State Senate approved [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 470](#), bipartisan legislation that would create a total of 12 new circuit court branches around the state to be allocated by the Director of State Courts, four in each year of 2021, 2022, and 2023. The bill was authored by a number of legislators, including Representative James Edming (R-Glen Flora).

“For some time, the drug epidemic that has hit our state hard has been driving up caseloads in courthouses around Wisconsin,” said Rep. Edming. “It has reached the point in some counties, including Sawyer and Marathon, which I represent, where the caseload requires an additional judge. This important legislation will help relieve some of the stress on the judicial system and allow the court system to more quickly and effectively meet the needs of the people it serves.”

An example of the high caseloads can be found in Sawyer County. In 2018, Sawyer County had 402 felony complaints filed in a one-judge county. In comparison, nearby Barron County had 452 felony complaints filed that were split amongst that county’s three judges.

“While this bill does not guarantee new circuit court branches to any specific counties, it does provide counties, like Sawyer and Marathon, with the opportunity to submit their plans to the Director of State Courts for consideration for a new circuit court branch,” said Rep. Edming. “I am pleased to see this important legislation clear the legislature and hope to see Governor Evers sign it into law soon.”

AB 470 now heads to the governor’s desk.