

Rep. Vos: Statement on passage of constitutional amendment for bail reform

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Madison... Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) released the following statement regarding the passage of assembly joint resolution [107](#) to amend the Wisconsin State Constitution and reform the legal procedure for how judges apply bail to individuals with criminal histories.

“In Milwaukee, one in five individuals charged with killing or trying to kill someone is already out on bail for another crime. More than half of those other crimes are also violent. The catch and release of violent offenders in our communities must end.

“What we saw in Waukesha was a tragedy. I am proud to support this constitutional amendment that would make horrific violence like that avoidable in the future.”

Under current law, commissioners and judges are not allowed to consider the dangerousness or violence of a defendant when deciding how much cash bail to set. The joint resolution provides an amendment to the state Constitution removing the restrictions for judges when determining the bail amount or if an individual can be denied bail by including the consideration of the safety of the community, seriousness of offense, and previous record to reflect the needs of the present.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 48 states permit courts to consider “dangerousness” in some fashion when crafting conditions of pretrial release.

A constitutional amendment has to pass two consecutive legislative sessions and then be approved by voters. It now heads to the state Senate for approval.