

Sen. Bradley, Rep. Wichgers: Unveil legislation to rein in low bail for repeat offenders

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MADISON, Wis. — State Senator Julian Bradley, R-Franklin, and State Representative Chuck Wichgers, R-Muskego, unveiled legislation Wednesday that would set minimum bail amounts for criminals who have already been convicted of a felony or violent misdemeanor.

This bill package is being released after Milwaukee District Attorney John Chisholm's office let serial offender Darrell Brooks Jr. out on seriously low bail, which allowed him to murder six people and injure many more in Waukesha.

“Community safety has to be a factor as our state considers the flight risk of criminals,” Senator Bradley said. **“Wisconsin lives are in danger because of the low bail that soft-on-crime judges and DAs are currently setting. This revolving door for criminals must end. We must bring accountability and transparency to the court system to ensure serial criminals don't continually have the opportunities to put our communities and families in harm's way.”**

There are three bills in the package:

1. [One](#) (co-authored by Senator Steve Nass, R-Whitewater) fixes judges' lax bond policies by requiring a minimum bond of at least \$10,000 for defendants who have previously committed a felony or violent misdemeanor. (For context, when bail was set at \$7,500 for several months, Brooks could not post bond and remained in jail. He was let out when bail was reduced to \$1,000.)
2. [The second](#) (also co-authored by Senator Nass) bans a court from setting an

unsecured bond or releasing without bail someone previously convicted of bail jumping. The defendant can only be released if they execute a secured bond or deposit cash in an amount of at least \$5,000.

3. [The third](#) (co-authored by Senators Eric Wimberger, R-Green Bay, and Nass) adds transparency to the pretrial release process by creating a bond transparency report. Specifically, the Department of Justice must publish a report documenting every crime charged, the conditions of release, who the presiding judge was, and the name of the prosecuting attorney assigned to the case.