

# WILL: Judge orders state agency to hand over public records to news outlet

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**The News:** Today, Judge Michael Kenitz signed an [alternative writ](#), commanding the Wisconsin Parole Commission (WPC) to immediately release the public records to news outlet, *Wisconsin Right Now*; or, show up in court, explaining why the commission cannot comply. Last week, the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) [filed suit](#) in Washington County Circuit Court on behalf of *Wisconsin Right Now*. WPC had months to fulfill the request, and have not done so, failing to comply with the public records law.

**WILL Quote:** WILL Deputy Counsel, Lucas Vebber, said, “This is a win for government transparency. The parole commission had the opportunity to do the right thing and comply with the law. It is unconscionable that it has taken this long already.”

**Client Quote:** Jim Piwowarczyk, co-editor of *Wisconsin Right Now*, said, “We have found a troubling pattern in which victims’ families did not even know the brutal killers of their loved ones were being paroled. We believe the public is entitled to the information the Parole Commission is withholding. What are they hiding?”

**Background:** Earlier this spring, *Wisconsin Right Now* submitted a public records request to the Wisconsin Parole Commission, asking for a list of all inmates who were paroled over a period of several years through 2022. While the commission originally responded in June with records through the end of 2021, the commission did not include any records from the 2022 calendar year. The commission stated it would provide records for this year once those were compiled, but gave no timeline for when that request would ultimately be fulfilled; and, did not

respond to repeated requests for updates.

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