

Weekly GOP radio address: Sen. Wanggaard talks about reforming Wisconsin's broken bail system

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Hi, I'm State Senator Van Waangard, representing most of Racine and Kenosha counties.

If you're like most people, you think that judges are considering the whole picture when setting bail for dangerous criminals. If you lived in another state, you'd be right. But in Wisconsin, you'd be wrong.

While every other state allows judges to consider a variety of factors when setting bail, Wisconsin limits its judges to just one: whether or not a defendant will return to trial. Criminal history, public safety, the seriousness of the crime - everything you'd want a judge to look at, everything you think they look at, everything other states look at - can't even be considered in Wisconsin. Under a constitutional change made 40 years ago, the only thing a Wisconsin judge can consider is whether or not someone is a flight risk.

During the upcoming spring election, you'll have two chances to amend the Wisconsin Constitution to bring Wisconsin's bail system more in line with the other 49 states. One ballot question will ask if you want judges to consider serious harm when setting bail. Another will ask if you want judges to consider the totality of the circumstances when setting bail.

You can vote for one, both, or none of these questions. This is your opportunity to restore integrity to the bail system in Wisconsin, along with adding accountability to the process. But you can only do it if you vote. Early voting starts Tuesday and the

election is on April 4th. Make sure your voice is heard.