

# State Bar of Wisconsin: Presidents comment on funding initiatives in Governor's budget proposal

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MADISON - The State Bar of Wisconsin issued a statement following Gov. Tony Evers' budget address. The joint statement comes from the Bar's elected leadership: Margaret W. Hickey (Milwaukee), President; Dean R. Dietrich (Wausau), President-Elect; and Cheryl Furstace Daniels (Madison), Past President.

"The State Bar has long been vocal about the lack of proper funding of all aspects of our legal system, which has resulted in a crisis of access to justice throughout our state. We are encouraged by and appreciative of Governor Evers' budget that proposes additional state support for Wisconsin's justice system, including the requested funding increase for both prosecutor and public defender programs."

Highlighted proposals in the Governor's Budget supported by the State Bar include:

- Increase in starting hourly pay for new Assistant District Attorneys and State Public Defenders to \$35 an hour
- Additional attorney positions for District Attorney offices and support staff for the State Public Defender's office
- Increase in the Private Bar rate to \$100 an hour with an increase in travel reimbursement
- Funding for four additional circuit court branches
- \$62 million for civil legal aid

"As the elected leaders of the State Bar, we will continue to push for bipartisan solutions for funding for both prosecutors and public defenders. The Governor provided the framework, and we encourage our state legislators to work together to find solutions to fund these important agencies."