

State Bar of Wisconsin: Presidents comment on Joint Finance Committee's criminal justice funding votes

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Madison, WI – The State Bar of Wisconsin issued a statement following today's supportive votes on criminal justice funding. 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 would like to commend and thank the members of the Joint Finance Committee for today's unanimous and bipartisan support of the criminal justice system. These investments are critical to address an ongoing need to recruit and retain experienced prosecutors and defenders through all levels of our system."

Proposals in the Joint Finance vote that were supported by the State Bar included:

- Increasing the starting hourly pay for new assistant district attorneys and state public defenders to \$36 an hour;
- Approving salary adjustments and pay progression for assistant district attorneys and state public defenders by \$8.76 an hour;
- Increasing the private bar rate to \$100 per hour with an increase in travel reimbursement to \$50; and
- Funding for four additional circuit court branches and funding for cybersecurity initiatives for the court.

"Hundreds of our members reached out to their elected officials to express their

support for these initiatives. The State Bar will continue to be engaged and involved in finding and supporting bipartisan solutions that improve our justice system. Attracting and retaining the dedicated professionals that work every day to provide a fair and equitable legal system for all citizens results in a better Wisconsin.”