

**Press release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 18, 2025

Inside Susan Crawford's track record of giving light prison sentences to convicted child sex offenders

Dane County Judge Susan Crawford has a documented history of handing down short sentences to convicted child sex offenders. Now, she wants a seat on the state Supreme Court. Here's a look at two of her controversial sentences:

Kevin Welton child assault case - In October of 2019, a jury convicted a Middletown, Wisconsin man of sexually assaulting a six year old child and seven year old child underwater at a swimming pool. The prosecutor asked Crawford to hand down at least 10 years in prison along with five years of extended supervision, but Crawford sentenced him to [only four years](#) in prison followed by six years of extended supervision to be served concurrently. In the two-month period between the verdict and sentencing, Welton was [out on bond](#) thanks to Judge Susan Crawford. Crawford [justified her sentence](#) by saying the "sexual assault contact that happened here is less severe than the type of contact that occurs in many sexual assaults that come before this court and for which I have sentenced people."

Curtis O'Brien child sexual assault case - Prosecutors charged a Black Earth, Wisconsin man named Curtis O'Brien in 2018 with the repeated sexual assault of a five year old, a felony that comes with a maximum sentence of 60 years in prison. In June 2020, Crawford lowered his \$10,000 bond to just \$500. He was released the next day despite living close to an elementary school. While he was out on bond, O'Brien was allowed to go to work, exercise at a gym, stay at a hotel, and walk his dog, according to court records.

In court, the victim's mother criticized the decision, saying how her daughter suffered emotional trauma while O'Brien ["got to run around free."](#)

In 2022, Crawford sentenced O'Brien to four years in prison, including time served. [Left-leaning corporate media outlets](#) recently defended Crawford's light sentence because O'Brien allegedly has a low IQ. Last week at the [debate](#), Crawford doubled down by saying, ["I don't regret that sentence."](#)

O'Brien's victim, a little girl, wrote an [impact statement](#) to Judge Crawford around the time of sentencing. She wrote in part, "This is the worst day that ever happened to me. My thoughts are that I really wanted to grab a knife and hurt him because I was super scared. My other thoughts were that I was going to die if I told anybody. I think he told me that he would hurt me. I felt

scared and I didn't know what to do because I was tiny then. It was weird because I didn't know what I was going to do. It felt like I was doing something wrong. It hurt sometimes."

Both of these men have served their sentences.

On the other hand, Crawford's opponent, Waukesha County Circuit Judge Brad Schimel, has a documented record of giving strict but fair sentences to these convicted criminals that target children. As a prosecutor and former Wisconsin Attorney General, Schimel successfully prosecuted a wide range of crimes, including elder abuse, human trafficking, homicide, sexual assault, internet crimes against children, and public corruption.

Early in-person voting begins today. Wisconsites can find their polling place [here](#).

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