



Wisconsin State Public Defender

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State Public Defender Kelli Thompson's Statement on Joint Finance Committee's Action on SPD Budget

Today's action by the Joint Finance Committee continues Wisconsin's proud tradition of providing "Justice For All." Our justice system is best served when both sides are treated fairly and equitably. Today's JFC motion -- and I sincerely thank Representative Nygren for advancing the motion, along with Senators Darling and Taylor -- provides additional compensation for Assistant State Public Defenders. This solution helps to protect the essential principle of parity in our justice system and assists the agency retain experienced attorneys. Experience on both sides allows the entire system to operate effectively and efficiently. The unanimous JFC vote in favor of the solution further reflects our state's commitment to a balanced justice system.

The budget for the State Public Defender approved today also included a measure to move the agency to a block-grant funding mechanism, as was done for the Director of State Courts Office during in the 2015 budget cycle. It also approved the additional funding provided in the Governor's budget for payments to assigned counsel and for transcripts and discovery.