

URGING GOVERNOR EVERS AND THE WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE
TO SUPPORT THE COUNTY COURTS

The Circuit Court system is intended to be a state-county partnership.

The state’s fiscal responsibilities include judges, court reporters, CCAP equipment, and direct court support funding through the Circuit Court Cost Appropriation.

Counties are fiscally responsible for the majority of other functions of the court, including, but not limited to the following: bailiffs and court security officers, courthouse building maintenance, phones and utilities, Clerk of Courts and Register in Probate, staff salaries and benefits, jury costs, psychological exams, guardians ad litem and court-appointed attorneys, expert witnesses, interpreters and translation fees, court commissioners, law libraries, corporation counsel, courtroom technology and audiovisuals, copying machines and other non-CCAP office technology, office supplies, furniture, recruitment and training, financial collection efforts, mail fees, printing costs, exhibit and file storage, access to state data, insurance, service of court documents, judicial staff attorneys, and equipment repair.

In 2023, the total cost to Wisconsin counties for running all Circuit Courts was \$237 million and the direct court support funding from the state to counties was only \$28 million—less than 12 percent of the actual cost to run the local courts.

Over the last 10 years, the increase in the county portion of cost to run the courts has been nearly six times higher than the increase in the Circuit Court Cost Appropriation provided to cover these costs.

The court expenses shouldered by counties and court revenues returned to the state by counties have led to deeply unbalanced net costs that force counties to pay almost \$150,000,000 more than the state to run the Circuit Courts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Dane County Board of Supervisors that Dane County supports the Wisconsin Clerks of Circuit Court Association (WCCCA) in its efforts to increase the state’s Circuit Court Cost Appropriation by \$70 million payable to Wisconsin counties in the 2025/27 Wisconsin State Budget.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be effective upon its passage and publication, and that a copy shall be sent to Governor Evers and all Wisconsin State Legislators representing Dane County.