

**From:** [Todd Meurer](#)  
**To:** [Krohn, Margaret](#)  
**Subject:** Support for PP&J-O-1 Budget Amendment  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 1:54:13 PM

---

CAUTION: External Email - Beware of unknown links and attachments. Contact Helpdesk at 266-4440 if unsure

Greetings:

Please pass along this email to the members of the Personnel and Finance Committee. I am very sorry I am not available to virtually appear before the committee this evening.

I write in support of amending the county budget to continue to provide funding for the two Pretrial Assessor positions. These positions provide the court with information that is necessary for fair, accurate, unbiased and efficient judicial decision making when setting bail and conditions of release at criminal initial appearances. Most importantly, these positions have been an essential component of Dane County's initiatives to address racial disparities in our criminal justice system.

I know this because, as a Circuit Court Commissioner, I presided over criminal initial appearance court in Dane County for nearly 30 years. During that time we did not have a pretrial assessment tool or pretrial assessors to gather information to assist pretrial release decision making. Pretrial bail decisions were made on the basis of extremely limited information and influenced by my implicit biases.

At the time I retired in 2015, Dane County was in the very early stages of implementing and testing the use of a race neutral pretrial assessment tool. Dane County has been a national leader in using and testing this assessment tool. It cannot be used without the pretrial assessor positions. Eliminating these positions would be a giant step backward in our journey towards racial equity in the criminal justice system.

I strongly urge you to support PP&J-O-1 and continue to fund the Pretrial Assessor positions. Quite simply, they are essential!!

Sincerely,

Todd E. Meurer  
Municipal Judge  
Circuit Court Commissioner, Retired

Sent from my iPad