



TERRY KATSMa

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 26th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Phone: (608) 266-0656
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0026
Rep.Katsma@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

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Contact: Rep. Terry Katsma
(608) 266-0656

Assembly Addresses Prosecutor Staffing Shortages

Madison—Representative Terry Katsma (R–Oostburg) voted to address staffing shortages in district attorneys’ offices across the state. The measure funds 54 new assistant district attorney (ADA) positions in 40 Wisconsin counties with the greatest need; Sheboygan County would receive funding for two new full-time ADAs.

A recent study from the nonpartisan Legislative Audit Bureau calculated the workload in each county and to what extent, if any, each county is understaffed to meet the need.

“I applaud this proposal that uses the criteria from the nonpartisan study to determine where to provide additional funding,” said Rep. Katsma. “Justice isn’t served for crime victims if our prosecutors are chronically overworked and unable to give the attention appropriately due to each case.”

“The District Attorney’s Office is dealing on a regular basis with the heroin crisis, the harm of methamphetamine and other drug use, domestic violence, sexual assaults, children who need to be removed from their homes and others in crisis,” explained Sheboygan County District Attorney Joel Urmanski. “Additional prosecutors to work with these cases will give direct help to victims, defendants, children and the entire County.”

“Our county is committed to holding people accountable and helping victims,” said Sheboygan County Administrator Adam Payne. “These two new positions will help prevent cases from becoming backlogged and ensure that justice is being served.”

Governor Scott Walker has signaled his support for the measure, which was passed on Thursday by the full State Assembly; the bill heads now to the State Senate for consideration.

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Representative Terry Katsma represents the 26th Assembly District including the cities of Sheboygan and Sheboygan Falls; the villages of Adell, Oostburg, Random Lake and Cedar Grove; and the towns of Lima, Holland, Sherman and Wilson. Representative Katsma serves as chairman of the Assembly Committee on Financial Institutions; as vice-chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means; and as a member of the committees on Federalism and Interstate Relations, Housing and Real Estate, Insurance and Workforce Development. He is also a member of the State Building Commission and the Governor’s Council on Financial Literacy.