



# Wisconsin State Public Defender

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## **Statement from State Public Defender Kelli Thompson on pay progression for Assistant State Public Defenders**

*I am thankful for the support from Governor Scott Walker, Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen, and Joint Committee on Finance Co-Chairs John Nygren and Alberta Darling for including in the committee's final version of the budget a funded pay progression system for assistant state public defenders, assistant district attorneys and assistant attorneys general.*

*The pay progression system included in the final package will provide a vital tool to ensure that we can retain attorneys with the experience to handle a high volume and wide variety of cases, as well as mentoring new attorneys. Experienced attorneys, for both the prosecution and defense, help to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of the court system. By retaining experienced attorneys, the State Public Defender agency can reduce costs associated with high staff turnover, and can also develop effective, evidence-based programs that draw upon the expertise of justice professionals throughout Wisconsin.*

*Public defenders are a critical part of Wisconsin's justice system. The support of the Governor, Attorney General, and the Joint Committee on Finance will benefit not only our attorneys who are fulfilling individuals' constitutional right to counsel, but the taxpayers of Wisconsin.*