



NEWS RELEASE

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Madison County court consolidation proposal moves forward

State Commission on Courts supports request to create unified circuit court system

INDIANAPOLIS—State Senator Tim Lanane (D-Anderson) and other members of the Commission on Courts voted unanimously on Thursday to support legislation that would allow Madison County courts to unify under one system. The court systems of Clark and Henry counties also received a nod from the commission to move forward in pursuing the change in state law necessary before consolidation could be implemented.

In Madison County, the change would convert the current mix of one circuit and five superior court divisions to one, consolidated circuit court system with six divisions.

Lanane said all current Madison County judges and the local bar association support the unified circuit court concept. Judge Thomas Newman, Madison Superior Court 3, attended the commission meeting and testified in support of a unified court system in Madison County.

“Consolidation makes sense in this situation,” Lanane said. “If it would help create greater efficiencies in the system, as we heard has happened in Monroe and Delaware counties, then I think we should allow Madison County to create the system that will work best for the citizens.”

A single Madison County Circuit Court would eliminate duplication of effort, combine and strengthen probation services, and provide additional judicial hours with specialized hearing officer and magistrate responsibilities.

The unified system would be modeled after existing court systems in neighboring Delaware County and in Monroe County. Judges from those counties testified before the commission on how the unified court system has enabled efficiency in case management and reduced costs.

Sen. Lanane proposed the Madison County consolidation language in Senate Bill 215 during the 2010 legislative session. The proposal was tabled and recommended for further consideration by the Commission on Courts. With the review complete and today’s unanimous vote, Lanane said he will reintroduce the measure again in 2011.

For more information on Sen. Lanane, his legislative agenda or other State Senate business, call 1-800-382-9467 or visit www.senatedemocrats.IN.gov.

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