



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
MARCH 25, 2008

CONTACT: SCOT ROSS  
414-220-9250

## As Gableman Vacations, Felony Backlog Increases

*Are Burnett County Obligations Taking Back Seat to Campaign?*

Milwaukee – A recent study by the Wisconsin Court System shows that the felony backlog in Burnett County Circuit Court Judge Mike Gableman’s courtroom continues to grow longer, presumably as he takes more days off from the bench to campaign for another job.

According to the February 26, 2008 report, in 2007, Burnett County ranked 66 of 71 counties in the length of time that it took the court system to dispose of felony cases during the year. Gableman’s court took a median of 204 days to dispose of felonies, significantly higher than the statewide median of 138 days. Since Gableman first became a judge in 2002, the felony backlog in Burnett County has climbed from 157 days to 204 days, an increase of 47 days, while the statewide median increased by only 8 days. [[Wisconsin Court System](#)]

While the felony backlog is increasing, newly released records show that Gableman took 16 days off as personal leave during the last three months of 2007. When Gableman announced his run for the Supreme Court, Gableman promised to focus on the job that he was elected to do: “My commitment to the people of Burnett County must be my highest priority and I cannot be on the campaign trail because that would diminish my ability to carry out the functions of my job.” [*Burnett County Sentinel*, 10/10/07]

“Like his positive campaign pledge, this appears to be a commitment that Mike Gableman has forgotten,” said Scot Ross, Executive Director of One Wisconsin Now. “It looks like putting felons behind bars may be taking a back seat to Mike Gableman’s political campaign. Judge Gableman needs to explain this increase in the backlog.”

The backlog of felony cases is more than a bureaucratic issue. The felony backlog means that in many cases criminals, including sex predators and drug dealers, are free in the community for a longer period of time before they are convicted and sentenced to prison. In at least three cases pending before Judge Gableman in the past few years those free waiting for trial were arrested for additional felonies while their original felony cases were being delayed.

Documents obtained by One Wisconsin Now included in this release are available at:  
<http://www.onewisconsinnow.org/page/content/suspiciousappointment>.

*One Wisconsin Now is a statewide communications network specializing in effective earned media and online organizing to advance progressive leadership and values.*

# # #