2007 SENATE BILL 170

April 27, 2007 – Introduced by Senators Hansen, Lehman, Taylor and Kreitlow, cosponsored by Representatives Sinicki, Grigsby, Schneider, Travis and Berceau. Referred to Committee on Campaign Finance Reform, Rural Issues and Information Technology.

AN ACT *to create* 753.30 (5) of the statutes; **relating to:** a notice to parties in civil actions of the Supreme Court rule regarding judicial recusal and regarding access to a statement of economic interests.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current Supreme Court rules, a judge is required to recuse himself or herself under certain situations when facts he or she knows or should know establish a question regarding his or her impartiality or are such as would cause a well–informed person knowledgeable about judicial ethics standards and the justice system to question the judge's ability to be impartial.

Current law requires all state public officials to file a statement of economic interests with the Ethics Board.

This bill requires the clerk of circuit court to provide every party in a civil action or proceeding a summary of the Supreme Court rules regarding recusal and impartiality and the procedure to follow to review and copy a statement of economic interests. The director of state courts is required to prepare a document that includes the summary and procedure and provide the clerks with sufficient copies without cost. The bill prohibits the clerk of circuit court from charging a party for the cost of mailing the document to the party.

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For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1.	753.30 (5)	of the statutes	is created to read:
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753.30 **(5)** (a) The clerk of circuit court shall mail to all of the parties named in a civil action or proceeding filed with the circuit court within 30 days after the filing a document prepared by the director of state courts that includes all of the following:

- 1. A summary of the provisions of SCR 60.04 (4), (5), and (6).
- 2. The procedure to be followed to review and copy the statement of economic interests filed by a circuit court judge under s. 19.43, including any fees charged and the address, telephone number, Internet Web site, if available, and contact person of the custodian of statements of economic interests filed under s. 19.43.
- (b) The director of state courts shall prepare in plain English the document required under par. (a), periodically update the document, and make sufficient copies of the document available to each circuit court without charge.
- (c) The clerk of circuit court may not charge a party for the cost of mailing the document under par. (a) to the party.

SECTION 2. Initial applicability.

(1) This act first applies to actions or proceedings filed after the effective date of this subsection.

SECTION 3. Effective date.

(1) This act takes effect on the first day of the 4th month after publication.

21 (END)