

August 25, 2025

Dear Switzerland County Council,

Peace and greetings in 2025! I hope this letter finds you well as we all continue to serve Switzerland County. I write you today in my official capacity as Prosecuting Attorney for the 91st Judicial Circuit (“Prosecutor”). As Prosecutor, I am submitting a written memorandum in support of my Budget request for the 2026 fiscal year.

Summary

Warren Buffet’s cornerstone advice when analyzing cost/benefit relationships remains: “Price is what you pay, value is what you get.” Therefore any budget inquiry for any organization should attempt to quantify not just the costs, but overall value provided by the services rendered. I attempt to do so below in order to provide better context and clarity in Council’s budget analysis.

Bear in mind, analyzing any legal system or government entity is fundamentally different than analyzing a corporation’s balance sheet. Our legal system is driven largely by the often-irrational human decisions of the criminal offenders it interdicts. The system is also—by design—both adversarial in nature and part of a larger system of checks and balances proscribed by both State and Federal Constitutions, fundamental to American government. Finally, unlike a private business, it is not—nor should it be—driven by profit. Here, our analysis is inherently broad, as our data is largely qualitative, often unquantifiable, and infinitely complex.

Still, we have distilled several guiding principles, borne out by comprehensive analysis of our experience in Switzerland County. Our analysis is also informed by experience in other jurisdictions:

1. Strategic focus on disrupting repeat offenders offers the best chance at rehabilitation and deters future crime
2. Efficient case resolution, combined with a focus on repeat offenders, encourages real-time efforts to treat root causes of criminal behavior, such as mental illnesses, addiction, and antisocial/criminal thinking
3. Efficiencies created in one department yield potential efficiencies and opportunities for other departments within the same system.

4. Efficient case resolution mitigates cost and therefore increases the relative value of every tax dollar committed.

In 2023, Switzerland County committed more repeat offenders to the Indiana DOC than any year since 2005.¹ This occurred because our entire legal system worked efficiently within their respective roles. First, our law enforcement focused on investigating repeat and violent offenders. Our Circuit Court and probation department efficiently—and fairly—processed cases and probation violations with an eye toward offering treatment whenever it made sense to do so. We have continued this trend in 2024.

This is the point: Offenders in prison can't commit crimes in Switzerland County. And if they return to our community after their release, it will be after having been afforded a legitimate shot at breaking the cycle. After that, it's on them to make the choice: become productive citizens or continue to be prioritized offenders. Put simply, removing repeat offenders from a community and providing them treatment is our best shot at disrupting—and hopefully reducing—crime.

Our Court also sentenced multiple repeat offenders—such as drug dealers, child molesters, or violent criminals—to long periods of incarceration. And the Prosecutor's Office endeavored to resolve cases quickly, offer second chances when appropriate, and disrupt repeat offenders when necessary.

Committing repeat offenders not only safeguards the community by preventing further crimes, but also provides offenders a sincere opportunity to rehabilitate via state-mandated therapeutic services offered by the Department of Corrections. Moreover, committing repeat offenders to prison seems to have helped drop Switzerland County's overall criminal case filings from their historic high in 2019 (413) to fewer than 200 cases in 2023. Switzerland County increased that commitment percentage substantially in 2024, despite pacing approximately only 220 annual case filings. This trend has held now well into 2025.

The drop in Switzerland County's annual criminal filings is no doubt the cumulative effect of many factors. However, the removal of repeat

¹ Hand counting Indiana DOC Commitment Orders, known as "abstracts" as well as confirming searches on the Indiana DOC website reveals that since 2023, Switzerland County has committed approximately 102 inmates, virtually all of them repeat offenders. Between 2012- 2022, the decade prior, reveals approximately 170 total. In fact our analysis indicates annual DOC placement statistics vastly underreported this number between 2023 and 2024. However the Indiana Department of Corrections has failed to return multiple calls and voicemails to discuss this discrepancy, therefore this analysis remains ongoing.

offenders certainly plays a major role. That is clear because focusing on repeat offenders leverages a famous economic reality known as the Pareto Principle. The Pareto principle, explained briefly below has been used by leading organizations to improve strategy and process since the early 1960's:

The Pareto principle (also known as the 80/20 rule, the law of the vital few and the principle of factor sparsity) states that for many outcomes, roughly 80% of consequences come from 20% of causes

<https://cklxx.people.wm.edu/teaching/math400/Kwaku.pdf>

<https://blog.proactioninternational.com/en/pareto-principle-better-business-decisions>

In keeping with Pareto's lesson, we attempted to measure the impact of repeat offenders, the "vital few" who are likely responsible for an outsized number of crimes.

Here is an example. In 2023, Switzerland County Prosecutor's Office hand-counted the criminal records of approximately 30 offenders who received prison sentences in 2023. The goal was to determine an approximate number of times where an offender "contacted" a criminal justice system. Using NCIC records, PSI data, and other court documents, the results were staggering. Notably, each "contact" was not counted multiple times within the same case or event, to ensure that the numbers were not inflated. Put simply, the count was done to see how many times this offender involved themselves with the criminal justice system and required intervention by police or a court over their lifetime.

Even conservative counts of the cumulative number of arrests, charges, convictions, violations and prison sentences for 30 offenders at over approximately 350 across multiple jurisdictions, both in Indiana and other states.

The full impact of deterring repeat offenders likely cannot be fully measured. That is because repeat offenders often come into contact with the legal system and related public safety organizations in ways that do not "show up" in criminal record searches. Further, we know that not every crime committed by repeat offenders is discovered by even the most diligent law enforcement. Here are some examples of how much disorder repeat offenders can bring to a small community:

- One offender averaged over 1.3 criminal contacts a year—every year—for 25 years until he was apprehended after a high-speed pursuit during a methamphetamine dealing investigation. Our Court sentenced him to over 2 decades in prison.
- Another sex offender admitted to abusing his 3-year-old victim up to 500 times before being caught. He admitted to at least 3 victims throughout his life. This was his first conviction. He now serves a multi-decade prison sentence that will likely encompass the rest of his life.
- These contacts do not include things like: incidents with child protective services, EMS runs due to violence and overdoses, or crimes and violations in jurisdictions that didn't show up on records searches.

The impact of repeat offenders has been observed in jurisdictions outside Switzerland County and has been documented in formal academic studies. Here are some examples taken from the U.S. Department of Justice and information published by Indiana Judge, Dustin Houchin of the Washington County Superior Court:

“Forty-three percent of people released from U.S. prisons are arrested for a new offense within the first year after release. Sixty-six percent are arrested for a new offense within three years of release. A whopping eighty-two percent are arrested for a new offense within ten years of release from prison. **(Antenangeli and Durose 2021).**”

https://bjs.ojp.gov/BJS_PUB/rpr24s0810yfup0818/Web%20content/508%20compliant%20PDFs

https://judex.substack.com/p/legal-briefs-d49?utm_source=publication-search

In 2023, the NYPD made 13,600 arrests on the New York subway system. Of the 13,600 arrests, 124 different people were arrested 5 or more times in 2023 alone. When you look closely at these 124 repeat subway offenders, you find that they have been arrested a combined 7,500 times in their lifetimes. That is an average of over 60 arrests per person.

https://judex.substack.com/p/legal-briefs-bc0?utm_source=publication-search

Put simply, by improving the focus of the Prosecutor's Office, we have revealed the immense talent of our related colleagues in the Court, Sheriff's Department, Probation Department, and treatment programs. And in an inherently compartmentalized system of check-and balanced American Government, that focus is critical to the overall function of the legal system.

Focused efficiency and collaboration help mitigate costs, which make our resources stretch farther and be wielded more potently. This is observable from just some indicators from across the system:

- On average a decrease in County jail population resulting in more reimbursement from the Department of Corrections and a safer, calmer, and more therapeutic jailhouse environment for both staff and inmates
- A general overall decrease in litigation timetable, making cases resolve faster and more efficiently, reducing the burden on court appointed counsel.
- More time per-case for multiple departments to focus on monitoring and disrupting repeat offenses through increased probation appointments, more focused attention to drug rehab for low level offenders and fewer crimes, cases, and violations filed as repeat offenders are removed from the community and placed in more intensive treatment at the DOC.
- Deeper focus on collateral issues such as child support collection hearings, restitution monitoring. In 2024, our Child Support Division collected over \$650,000.00 to be disbursed to Switzerland County children in need of support.
- The introduction of a new Prosecutor's website provided by the State to taxpayers at no additional local expense
- An increased ability to provide in house training to LEO as well as real time support in criminal investigations

As an arm of State government, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney is unique in that it's costs are heavily subsidized by state and federal—not local—tax revenue. It is also one of the smaller departments in our system. Finally, the office's efforts to receive state/federal reimbursement, and recapture resources through programs like pretrial diversion of low level criminal offenses, infraction deferral of traffic matters, and compliance with federal criminal asset forfeiture allows our department to mitigate its burden to the local tax base. This budget proposal explains those cost mitigations.

Further, I request one additional measure: cut the Prosecutor's salary in the maximum possible amount allowable by law.

First, I am asking you to cut my salary of any and all Switzerland County tax dollars, so those funds can be distributed to my staff. My request is likely unprecedented. However, economic inflation impacts all of us, including my staff. Accordingly, I am asking those funds be taken from me, so that they can be reinvested into the salaries of my staff. I believe we can fund this request for essentially no meaningful impact to the general fund, let alone the taxpayer. I will step through this analysis below.

I am an official of the 91st Judicial Circuit, not the County. Therefore, the majority of my salary is set, controlled, and paid by the State of Indiana through state law, the statewide budget process, and 2023 annual statewide tax revenue.² Neither my Chief Deputy nor myself draw health insurance, or retirement benefits from Switzerland County funds. However like many counties, Switzerland County has supplemented the Prosecutor's salary in an amount of \$5,000.00 dollars a year. Switzerland County has paid its Prosecuting Attorney an additional \$5,000.00 dollars since shortly after the creation of the 91st Judicial Circuit. I know the former Prosecutor requested and received \$5,000.00 for many years, including in the 2023 budget that was approved in 2022. And I followed suit in 2023 for the 2024 budget. However, my review of the salaries for my office's administrative positions reveals they are in critical need of redress and thus motivates this request. Unlike a Circuit Court, where it is likely illegal to lower salaries during a term, Council can, upon request, lower the salary of the Prosecutor. In fact, I'm asking for that to be done to benefit my staff and fully erase any local tax burden that my salary would create.

Our County should pay me less—in fact the County should pay me nothing—so we can use those dollars to pay my staff more. Pursuant to this request, I ask you cut my personal salary in the amount of \$5,000.00 dollars/year, the maximum amount of funds provided by Switzerland County tax dollars. This is the only amount of salary I receive from Switzerland County tax dollars. This pay-cut would officially reduce my personal salary burden on county tax dollars at \$0.00.

Next, I ask Council to provide an additional \$1,000.00 dollars for a total of \$6,000.00 divided by three employees. And divide that \$6,000.00 equally amongst 3 employees in both the Criminal and Child Support Division. That is in addition to any “general” pay raises approved by Council this year. In keeping with similar departments, our Office has requested

² See *State of Indiana's Financial Report...at your service*, Office of Indiana State Comptroller Elise Nieshalla, Issue Date: June 2024.

those “general raises” to be 5% in addition to funds reallocated by my pay cut. If my \$5,000.00 dollars is cut, matched, and redistributed, it in fact leverages child support reimbursement and costs overall *less* than it would if you simply paid that salary as it stands now.

That would place total salaries for our administrative team at \$45,638.00³ annually. While that is still lower than the 2025 lowest recommended salary range for paralegals, office managers, and victim advocates, it is realistic and attainable.⁴

In small teams, the value of each team member’s contribution increases. That is true for each staff member in the Prosecutor’s Office due to multiple factors. First, as a very small department, each staff member is expected to assume work duties that would be spread across a wider range of positions in larger offices. In the Criminal Division, each staff member is expected to assist in being (1) a Receptionist (2) an Office Manager, (3) Paralegal, and (4) Victim Advocate.⁵

Second, there are only 2 administrative employees in the Criminal Division, which makes flexibility and cross-training critical in the event of the complex cases, illness, emergencies, or even simply excused absence due to PTO. That is even more acute in the Child Support Division that houses only 1 administrative position.

Importantly, we receive a massive subsidy and reimbursement through state funds for our child support division. For every dollar of county funds spent, this department is reimbursed at 66% from the State of Indiana under

³ The Prosecutor’s Office is somewhat unique in that it may be required to respond to emergencies, as both administrative staff and attorneys may be required to work in addition to “normal” Courthouse hours of 40-hour workweek. As the Prosecutor’s Office is open and appropriately staffed and may be called in emergency circumstances to provide real-time administrative or legal support in the event of complex cases or investigations, such as homicide investigations or to accommodate Speedy Trial requests per Indiana Criminal Rule 4 and other controlling authority. Thankfully, we have not yet had an event requiring after-hours/overtime administrative support, however our attorneys routinely field calls and provide legal support in real-time long after the Courthouse doors close.

⁴ See *2025 Salary Research Report, Prosecutor Non-Attorney Salary Schedule*: Salaries for Paralegal range: \$48,710.00 to \$62,240.00; Victim Advocate range: \$50,775.00 to \$64,880.00; Office Manager range: \$47,661.00 to \$60,901.00. I take careful note that the 2025 Salary Schedule was based on analysis of 80/92 Indiana Counties, the Association of Indiana Counties Factbook, and other sources.

⁵ See *Salary Research Report, Sample Standardized Job Descriptions* for a general understanding of various administrative positions common to Prosecutors Offices. Obviously, given our small staff size requires hybrid work duties. However these sample descriptions give general background.

our cooperative agreement.⁶ This reimbursement is guaranteed through contract. That 66% reimbursement means that Council can fund a \$2,000.00 increase while the actual budgetary impact for that position is only \$660.00 dollars after reimbursement.

In 2024, our Child Support Division collected \$669,173.97 on behalf of the children who need it. Switzerland County's investment in its Child Support Division is wise. Further, that reimbursement applies to every budgeted dollar for our Child Support Division, massively decreasing the impact to our local tax base.

Here is a detailed breakdown of how Child Support reimbursement saves Switzerland county tax dollars. This breakdown comes from consultant, Beth Mulry, of Maximus, a firm that assists our office in its efforts to fully comply with State and Federal requirements related to our Child Support Division. We began our relationship with Maximus in early 2023:

Reimbursement to County General Fund Generated by Prosecutor IV-D Monthly Expense Claim

- Total Reimbursement Generated
 - 2023 - \$46,323.40
 - 2024 - \$41,244.73
 - January to June 2025 - \$35,456.27

In addition to the Monthly Expense Claim reimbursement revenue, the county also receives reimbursement for a portion of the indirect expenses pertaining to your office and the Clerk's Office. This would include expenses like the Auditor paying your claims and payroll; the Treasurer reconciling the county bank account; Commissioners handling employee benefit and policy matters; maintaining your space in the Courthouse. We calculate this reimbursement in the annual IV-D Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) that we prepare for your Auditor. If you were not doing the Monthly Expense Claims, the CAP reimbursement would go down dramatically. The reimbursement for the CAP is combined as one total for your office and the Clerk.

- Total CAP Reimbursement Generated by the Clerk and Prosecutor
 - 2022 CAP paid to County in 2024 - \$12,916.00
 - 2023 CAP paid to County in 2025 - \$27,286.00

As you can see, our compliance efforts and relationship with Maximus ensure (1) the highest possible reimbursement, (2) efficiency in compliance, and (3) drastic improvements in CAP reimbursement compared to 2022, which positively affects both the Prosecutor's Office as well as other allied departments.

⁶ See *2024-2025 Cooperative Agreement for Federal Financial Participation for Prosecuting Attorneys Performing Title IV-D Services*, Page 14.

Since January 1, 2023, the Prosecutor’s Office has been able to further mitigate overall costs through the use of programs like pre-trial diversion, infraction deferral⁷, and dollars seized during a joint state federal drug investigation in approximately 2019. Our efforts have resulted in the following net increases in resources as well as defrayed expenses to the County’s general fund:

Fund	2022	7/15/2025	Total Increase
PCA 8099	\$3,763.08	\$7,537.58	+\$3,774.50
Inf. Deferral 4903	\$25,526.10	\$26,141.11	+\$615.01
PTD 1182	\$10,792.73	\$47,049.94	+36,257.21
IV-D Inc. 8895	\$40,418.00	\$52,064.00	+11,646.00
Total	\$80,499.91	\$132,792.63	+52,292.72

Even after expenses, our office was able to recapture over \$52,000.00 that may be used to reinvest in training, upgrading, and further supporting our county’s law enforcement efforts. Viewed with a holistic, dollars in/dollars out lens, our efforts have essentially mitigated the annual salary for an administrative position so far this term.

Further, we used money seized from a drug dealer—rather than the taxpayers—to replace our outdated technology. The Prosecutor’s Office was able to save Switzerland County Taxpayers \$9,606.24 dollars in equipment costs by utilizing seized assets from a joint state/federal drug investigation to pay for new computers, software, and other technology necessary to run the office and present cases in court.

These upgrades were necessary as Microsoft is ending support for Windows 10 in favor of the new Windows 11. Microsoft’s announcement will render Microsoft Windows 10 obsolete to the point that they are unable to operate with new systems and thus required replacement before October 2025. Our office computers were well past service life, with some nearing 8 years of use.

This decision saved the County thousands of dollars. Historically, Switzerland County Commissioners are responsible for the costs of such equipment, and would source those funds from their budgets. Ultimately those costs would be borne by the taxpayers. Instead, our office used the

⁷ 34-28-5-1(f). Enforcement Proceedings; 33-37-4-1(c). Collection of fees for conviction of felony and misdemeanor – Diversion program fees – Transfer of fees collected – Distribution of partial collection; 33-39-1-8. When prosecution may be withheld

money seized from a now deceased drug dealer. And in turn, have upgraded our capabilities to run new and better programs well into the future. Further, these computers are laptops, which allow our office to function simultaneously in and outside the Courtroom. And they allow us the resilience and capacity to work remotely—and securely—in the event of an emergency, bad weather, major case, or other circumstance.

This budget cycle, my only non-salary request is to provide \$1,000.00 dollars for professional services. This request is reasonable given that we have not requested any increases this term, despite a cumulative inflation rate of 10.4% from 2022 to 2025. This request coincides with a looming murder trial, which is certain to generate unusual litigation expenses, given the sheer complexity of the evidence and the State’s need for expert witness testimony.

The Prosecutor’s Office has access to two funding streams that can be utilized for training and staff development. Discretionary funds from 2 different accounts, Fund 4903 and Fund 1182 permit the Prosecutor’s Office to build capacity both internally and with other agencies. For instance, my Office plans to offer multiple Law Enforcement Agencies instant test kits for methamphetamine and cocaine to further their ability to interdict drug crimes in real time.

As always, my request is well short of the total amount of available funds. I am accordingly requesting Council appropriate within those funds for training and staff development, miscellaneous expenses, and professional services in the amount of \$8,000.00 from Fund 1182: Pretrial Diversion and \$8,000.00 from Fund 4903: Infraction Deferral.⁸ Since those dollars are already located in those funds, I am asking Council to permit my office to use them. Notably, these funds do not revert to the general fund, so they may stay in these accounts indefinitely and are likely to support necessary training and law enforcement efforts for multiple years with no additional cost to the taxpayer.

⁸ See Prosecutor’s 2025 Budget Worksheets, including Fund 4903 and 1182.

Overall Budgetary Impact

In making this request, I am mindful of the big picture: total cost of services for the Switzerland County taxpayer.⁹ The impact is minimal, and we may have a potential source of additional funding, due to the wise investments of Switzerland County tax dollars.

As you engage in budget deliberations, keep in mind the relationship between cost and value. After three years, it is evident that our office has provided legitimate value: lowering criminal filings, disrupting repeat offenders, and collecting hundreds of thousands of dollars in critical support for our community's children. And whenever possible, our office mitigated costs to the County. This request helps ensure our office remains in strong position to continue its service to Switzerland County.

Thank you in advance for your time and commitment in considering this request. All our jobs are very difficult, and you have my respect and gratitude for your service.

Gratefully Yours,

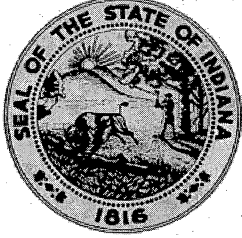
/s/Ryan M. Marshall

Ryan M. Marshall, 32265-69

Prosecuting Attorney, 91st Judicial Circuit

⁹ Given inflation, this is evidence that our office is operating with reasonable efficiency despite a cumulative inflation rate of 10.4% between 2022 and 2025. See *Inflation Calculator* at <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/> accessed on August 25, 2025 analyzing cumulative inflation between 2022 and 2024.

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Friday, October 17, 2025

Switzerland County Council and Auditor,

Peace and Greetings! Having reviewed a request by Council to amend my 2026 budget request, I am writing to you with good news!

The good news is I have already made multiple fiscally responsible choices throughout this term. Those choices mitigate my department's budgetary impact well in excess of the requested reductions. Here is how I have achieved this huge budget mitigation.

First, I have requested to cut my own pay in the maximum amount of all Switzerland County tax dollars. Council has paid the former prosecutor an additional \$5,000.00 per year—every year—since near the inception of the 91st Judicial Circuit. My request to cut my own pay is likely the first pay cut requested by the Prosecuting Attorney in the history of the 91st Judicial Circuit. My request is that you cut \$5,000.00 from my salary down to \$0.00, making me 100% free of any local burden to the Switzerland County Taxpayer. And I intend to continue to request that pay cut in every budget season for the rest of my term. This request alone, if honored, would exceed the entire amount of reductions requested by Council during its October 14, 2025 meeting. However, Council apparently refused this request—for the second consecutive year—at that meeting, less than an hour before requesting budget cuts.

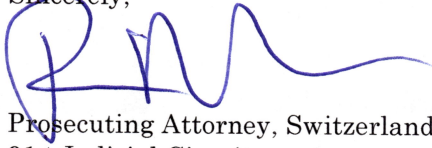
Second, I have signed a contract with our State and Federal government *guaranteeing* 66% reimbursement for every dollar budgeted for Child Support Services. Guaranteed reimbursement means that 20% of my *entire* department's combined budget will be reimbursed, should it be spent. I have researched, analyzed, briefed, and presented budget mitigation in both 2024 and 2025 in various public meetings. I have included that research, analysis, and briefing in an addendum to this letter as understanding this concept is critical to any budget determination.

Third, I have used essentially the same budgeted amounts that were appropriated in 2022 for any non-salary accounts. However, our office—like every organization in America—has faced approximately 10.7% cumulative inflation from 2022 to 2025. I would have to request 10.7% overall *budget increase* to every account in order to maintain the same purchasing power allotted in 2022. Instead, we have taken steps to decrease budget impact wherever possible. Now, our office is tasked with a complex murder, set for trial in 2026. While I do not comment on pending litigation, this trial will no doubt involve serious resources, including testimony from multiple expert witnesses. A complex murder trial will almost certainly generate atypically high litigation expenses.

Should Council wish to cut budgets further, I would be remiss if I did not once again remind you of the critical information above. In keeping with my office's constitutional responsibilities, the only conceivable cuts would be to reduce every non-salary line item in the Child Support Division to \$0.00. And to reduce the requested \$7,000.00 amount for the Criminal Division's Legal Services line item to \$6,000.00. However, those decisions are highly likely to (1) negatively impact our office's capacity to operate, (2) reduce our ability to receive reimbursement, (3) generate requests for additional appropriations in 2026, and (4) impair the quality of services rendered. As one example, our Child Support Division would no longer have a reimbursable line item for office supplies. While I do not recommend such cuts, I have highlighted them for you in the paragraph above in a good faith effort to respond to your request. Please note the date of this letter as my response was made within the 48-hour deadline Council proposed at its evening meeting on October 14, 2025. Had Council raised these concerns during my budget hearing in August, 2025, I would have addressed them there with more in-depth analysis.

providing this information to the Switzerland County Council for their decision-making. I have on multiple occasions explained in detail, the (1) structure of my office, (2) its personnel roles, and (3) our operating costs. I have also provided considerable analyses of our successful efforts in deterring crime by disrupting repeat offenders as we are a department charged with public safety. For all new members to Council, I have included a copy of the (1) 2025 Budget Memorandum, proposal as well as my (2) 2024 written budget request memorandum and (3) relevant research addenda. Please ensure that you add all of these documents, along with this letter, to the County website once you have received them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'P' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Prosecuting Attorney, Switzerland County
91st Judicial Circuit