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## **Governor Appoints Samantha DeWester to the Indiana PD Commission** *Commission Chair Mark W. Rutherford applauds Holcomb's Selection*

(Indianapolis) – Indianapolis Attorney Samantha DeWester has been appointed to a four-year term on the Indiana Public Defender Commission (Commission) by Governor Eric Holcomb, effective immediately. DeWester replaces Richard Bray, who notified the Governor of his decision to step down.

“The Commission is very grateful to former State Senator Richard Bray for his service to the Commission and his lifetime of contributions to Indiana’s criminal justice system,” said Mark W. Rutherford, Commission Chair. “We wish him the very best in his future endeavors.”

Rutherford applauded Holcomb’s choice of DeWester.

“We thank Governor Holcomb for his wise appointment of Samantha DeWester to the Commission. Her experience practicing law in the areas of criminal justice, state & county government, and the private sector make her an ideal choice. We welcome her with enthusiasm.”

Currently an attorney with the infrastructure consulting firm of Beam, Longest and Neff, DeWester has previously served as Chief Counsel to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Assistant Commissioner for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. She has also served as the prosecuting attorney & deputy corporation counsel for the City of Indianapolis. She recently served on the Marion County Public Defender Board and began her career as an attorney with the Marion County Public Defender Agency.

“I’m honored by Governor Holcomb’s confidence in me, and I look forward to continuing my public service,” said DeWester. “The fair administration of criminal justice requires constant vigilance and oversight, and I intend to use this new role to advance that goal.”

The Commission sets standards and guidelines for public defenders practicing in counties that receive a partial state reimbursement for public defense expenses.

Indiana’s public defense system is county-based, with a mixture of offices, full- and part- time contractors, and hourly reimbursement of private attorneys. Counties may choose to follow the Commission’s standards and guidelines in exchange for a percentage reimbursement of most public defense expenses. Currently, 67 counties participate in the Commission’s reimbursement program, while the remaining 25 counties operate without the Commission’s support and oversight.

For further information, please visit: <https://www.in.gov/publicdefender/>. Follow the Commission at [@IndianaPDCom](https://www.in.gov/publicdefender/). The Governor’s full press release announcing the appointment [may be found by clicking here](#).

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