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Rutherford Re-Elected Chair of Indiana Public Defender Commission *County support, system efficiencies, and quality improvement remain goals*

(Indianapolis) – Indianapolis Attorney Mark W. Rutherford was unanimously re-elected Chair of the Indiana Public Defender Commission (Commission) for a 2-year term at the most recent meeting. He has chaired the Commission since 2007 and has served as a Gubernatorial appointment to the Commission under three separate Governors.

“Mark provides steady leadership to the Commission’s members and staff, and I was pleased he agreed to serve another term,” said Representative Ryan Dvorak (D-South Bend), a Commission member appointed by the Indiana Speaker of the House.

During his time as chair, the Commission’s standards and reimbursement program has grown from 53 counties to 64 counties, and the Commission has been able to fully fund county reimbursement requests since 2009.

“I consider it an honor and a privilege to assist Indiana counties in fulfilling their constitutional obligation to provide high quality legal defense services to Hoosiers unable to afford counsel,” Rutherford said, “And I hope we do it with an eye toward efficient and effective use of taxpayer funds.”

Rutherford is a shareholder at the Indianapolis Law Firm of Thrasher, Buschmann, and Voelkel, PC, where he focuses his practice on business law, business defense, litigation, and election law. He has previously served as both a deputy prosecutor and deputy public defender in Marion County. He also represents the Commission on Indiana’s Justice Reinvestment Advisory Commission.

“Mark has served the Commission and the citizens of Indiana well with his dual focus on efficiency and quality,” said Senator Eric Koch (R-Bedford), a Commission member appointed by the Indiana Senate President Pro Tempore who also serves as the Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. “I look forward to continuing to serve alongside him.”

Indiana's public defense system is county-based, with a mixture of offices, full- and part-time contractors, and hourly work. Counties may choose to follow the Commission's standards and guidelines in exchange for a percentage reimbursement of most public defense expenses. Currently, 64 counties participate in the Commission's reimbursement program, while the remaining 28 counties operate without the Commission's oversight.

For further information, please visit: <https://www.in.gov/publicdefender/>. Follow the Commission at [@IndianaPDCom](#).

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