

*Chris Raff*

Prosecuting Attorney salaries

Commissioners:

Thank you for donating your time to address the matter of salaries for Arkansas court officials. I was an elected Prosecuting Attorney in Arkansas for 32 years ending my service December 31, 2014. No other court official is vested with as much absolute discretion in the criminal justice system as Prosecuting Attorneys - the decisions of who to investigate, who to charge with crimes and even the decision whether to seek the the ultimate punishment of death. Prosecuting Attorneys are the leaders of the largest law firms in their respective judicial districts. The public deserves the best and most competent lawyers possible to advocate on behalf of the good people of this state, both in courtrooms as well as advising police and investigating agencies. It is truly a 24 hour/7 day a week job encompassing much that the public never sees. It requires professional and intelligent decisions that many times must be made quickly with no advance notice, but which will have critical implications to the prosecution of criminals as well as to the protection of the innocent. I urge you to give serious consideration to increasing the salary of Prosecuting Attorneys so that Arkansas can attract and keep the best lawyers possible in this important position.

Chris Raff  
Attorney at Law  
Searcy, Arkansas

*GOODMAN, PAMELA FAYE*

request for 23% pay raise for prosecuting attorneys

I do NOT agree with a 23% pay raise for the prosecuting attorneys. NO average person receives a 23% pay raise. What avenue do we have to protest?

Pam Goodman

Pam Goodman

*John Threet*

Elected Prosecutor raises

Dear Commissioners,

I was asked if I was willing to write a short note on behalf of the elected prosecutors.

I began this January as a circuit judge but the preceding 22 years I was a prosecutor and for the last 8 years I was the elected prosecutor for Washington and Madison counties.

I believe the pressure on the elected prosecutor in each judicial district is incredible. While both circuit judges and elected prosecutors face constant scrutiny for daily decisions that have a lasting impact on many, there is a large disparity in the salary of the two offices.

The demands faced by prosecutors in their daily job is incomparable to any other profession. The stress on each can take a very quick toll as the decisions can alter the lives of people and often unfold in the media for everyone to scrutinize.

I am hopeful the commission will consider the nature of the elected prosecutors position in making its' decision.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

John Threet

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April 28, 2015

Dear Members of the Independent Citizens Commission:

I am Elizabeth "Betsy" Danielson and I am currently serving South Logan County as their District Judge. Just out of law school, I served Pulaski County as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney doing misdemeanor appeals and trying felony cases in Circuit Court. As a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney I also did intake when citizens had a complaint and worked on call to do search warrants and help with investigations after office hours. I also have had the honor of serving as a Circuit Judge twice, two years in the Juvenile Division and one year doing the criminal docket both in the Fifteenth Judicial District. While serving as Circuit Judge I worked with the serving Prosecuting Attorney on an almost daily bases. The Prosecutor's work is a 24/7 job more often than not working through the weekends when an investigation is on going. The volume and variety of cases reviewed and investigated is ever increasing and the hours needed to properly prepare a case for trial while at the same time attending court for bond setting and pleas requires an enormous amount of time. The Prosecutor must be up on the latest and ever changing criminal procedures and rules of evidence. Not only does the Prosecutor have the responsibility of trying cases but also is involved with Drug Court, Victim Witness programs and speaking in the many communities as to the need and better ways to protect the citizens. Based on my experience of having been a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, having worked with the Prosecuting Attorney and knowing the extent of their responsibilities it is my request that this Commission increase their salaries to within 95% of what the Circuit Judges are currently receiving.

I thank you for your work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Betsy Danielson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and email address.

Betsy Danielson

Betsy.Danielson@DanielsonLawFirm.com

EWD/ce