

NEWS RELEASE

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Wyoming Legislature Funds Court Security Improvements

Chief Justice E. James Burke, in collaboration with the Wyoming Court Security Commission and the Office of Homeland Security, announced today that the Sixty-Third Legislature of the State of Wyoming, through Enrolled Act 56, has appropriated one million eighty three thousand, four hundred and twenty two dollars (\$1,083,422.00) “to provide funding for court security improvements including the purchase of security equipment within courthouses or construction or modification of facilities containing a state court.”

The legislative appropriation will be deposited into an account within the Wyoming State Auditor’s Office and was earmarked for eight (8) counties: Albany, Big Horn, Crook, Goshen, Niobrara, Park, Platte, and Weston. The named counties must submit an application to the Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board to access the funding. Applicant counties must provide matching funds.

In August and September, 2014, court security experts from the National Center for State Courts conducted court security assessments on the counties referenced in the legislation and it is anticipated that the legislative appropriation will be used to make the improvements outlined in these assessment reports.

“I want to thank the Wyoming Legislature for supporting much needed court security improvements. I want to thank the Wyoming Court Security Commission, the Office of Homeland Security, the Wyoming County Commissioners Association, local judges and communities who worked together to bring awareness and action to this issue. This appropriation allows communities to make local court facilities safer, not only for their judges and county employees, but for the public in general,” Chief Justice Burke said.

“My appreciation to the Wyoming Supreme Court for their pursuit of grants to allow for the NCSC to complete risk assessments of our most vulnerable state courts. Recognition to all three branches of government for their focus this session to keep our courts a safe place to work and do business,” commented Director Guy Cameron, Wyoming Homeland Security.

“With the security funding for these eight counties, and the matches of local funds, more than half of Wyoming’s counties will have completed or will be working toward improved security for Wyoming families who are required to conduct business in their local courthouses. As remaining counties consider their budget priorities, if improved courthouse security is among them, I look forward to working with them to achieve their goals,” stated Senator Drew Perkins.