



SPOTLIGHT

New State Law Targets Reckless Driving

In October, the Wisconsin Legislature passed a new law that allows police officers to impound vehicles used in reckless driving offenses regardless of whether the driver cited 1) is the vehicle owner; 2) has a prior reckless driving conviction; and 3) has an outstanding or unpaid fine for a reckless driving offense.

Prior law required those conditions before an officer could authorize a vehicle to be impounded.

In addition, the new law allows local ordinances to authorize continued impoundment until outstanding fines and forfeitures are paid.

If the vehicle was reported stolen, the vehicle must be released to the owner without payment of a fee or charge.

As of press time, Gov. Tony Evers was expected to sign the bill.

Source: *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Wisconsin Legislature **WL**

ON THE RADAR

PBJ Litigation: Smucker Jams Up Trader Joe's

J.M. Smucker Co. recently filed a lawsuit against Trader Joe's grocery chain, claiming the design and packaging of Trader Joe's new frozen peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are too similar to Smucker's Uncrustables, according to the Associated Press.

The PBJ lawsuit was filed in federal court in Ohio in October.

"Smucker does not take issue with others in the marketplace selling prepackaged, frozen, thaw-and-eat crustless sandwiches," the company said in the lawsuit. "But it cannot allow others to use Smucker's valuable intellectual property to make such sales." **WL**



BY THE NUMBERS

11.5%

The percentage increase in bankruptcy cases filed for the 12-month period between June 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025. More than 540,000 bankruptcy cases were filed in that period, including just more than 54,000 in the Seventh Circuit (Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana).

In Wisconsin's eastern district, the number of bankruptcy cases increased by 11.5%, with an increase of 9.5% in the western district.

"For more than a decade, total filings fell steadily, from a high of nearly 1.6 million in September 2010 to a low of 380,634 in June 2022. Total filings have increased each quarter since then, but they remain far lower than historical highs," according to U.S. Courts. **WL**

QUOTABLE

"We had physicians in town, but sometimes depending on the medical problem, we had to go to a bigger city, and the closest one for us was about an hour away in Duluth."

– Dr. Mike Medich, regional director for the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine (WARM), part of the U.W. School of Medicine and Public Health.

Dr. Medich was discussing the state of rural medicine in his childhood, but one report notes that "access to health care has only gotten worse for most rural communities."

WARM "provides students with extensive training and experiences pertinent to doctors who practice in rural areas, such as the ability to handle a wide variety of issues with limited resources." As of July, more than 150 WARM graduates have settled in rural communities.

Could a program like WARM work to address attorney shortages in rural Wisconsin? A recent State Bar of Wisconsin Rotunda Report noted that "the majority of Wisconsin's counties have less than one active attorney per 1,000 residents" and "more than 60% of the state's lawyers are based in three urban counties – Milwaukee, Dane, and Waukesha."

Source: U.W. School of Medicine and Public Health **WL**

DID YOU KNOW?

Selected Stats from the U.S. Supreme Court's 2024-25 Term

Cases from the First, Fourth, Ninth, and Tenth Circuits were reversed 100% of the time in the U.S. Supreme Court's last term.

The Fifth Circuit (Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) had the most cases reversed (10), but three other cases were affirmed.

The court divided 6-3 in 10 cases (15%). In 9% of those cases, Justices Sotomayor, Kagen, and Jackson dissented. In 6% of the 6-3 decisions, Justices Thomas, Alito, and Gorsuch dissented.

Chief Justice John Roberts was in the majority in 95% of cases and did not write a single separate opinion.

Source: SCOTUSblog, Final Stat Pack for the 2024-25 Term. **WL**