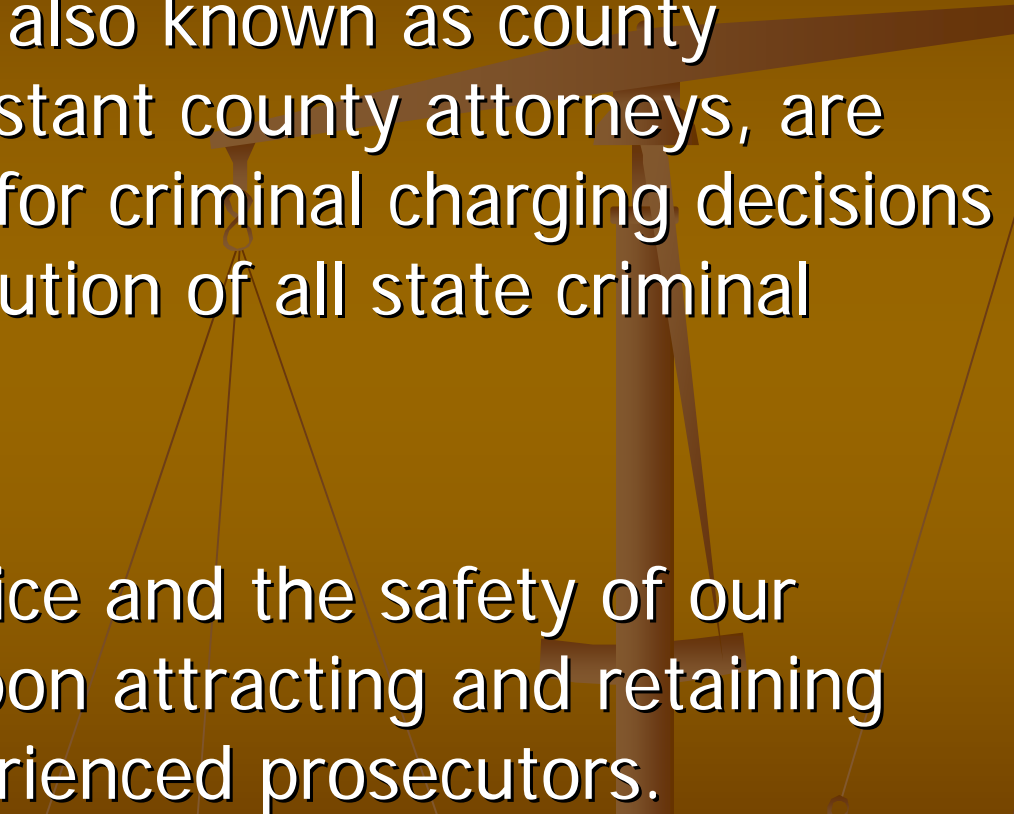




# Prosecutor Pensions

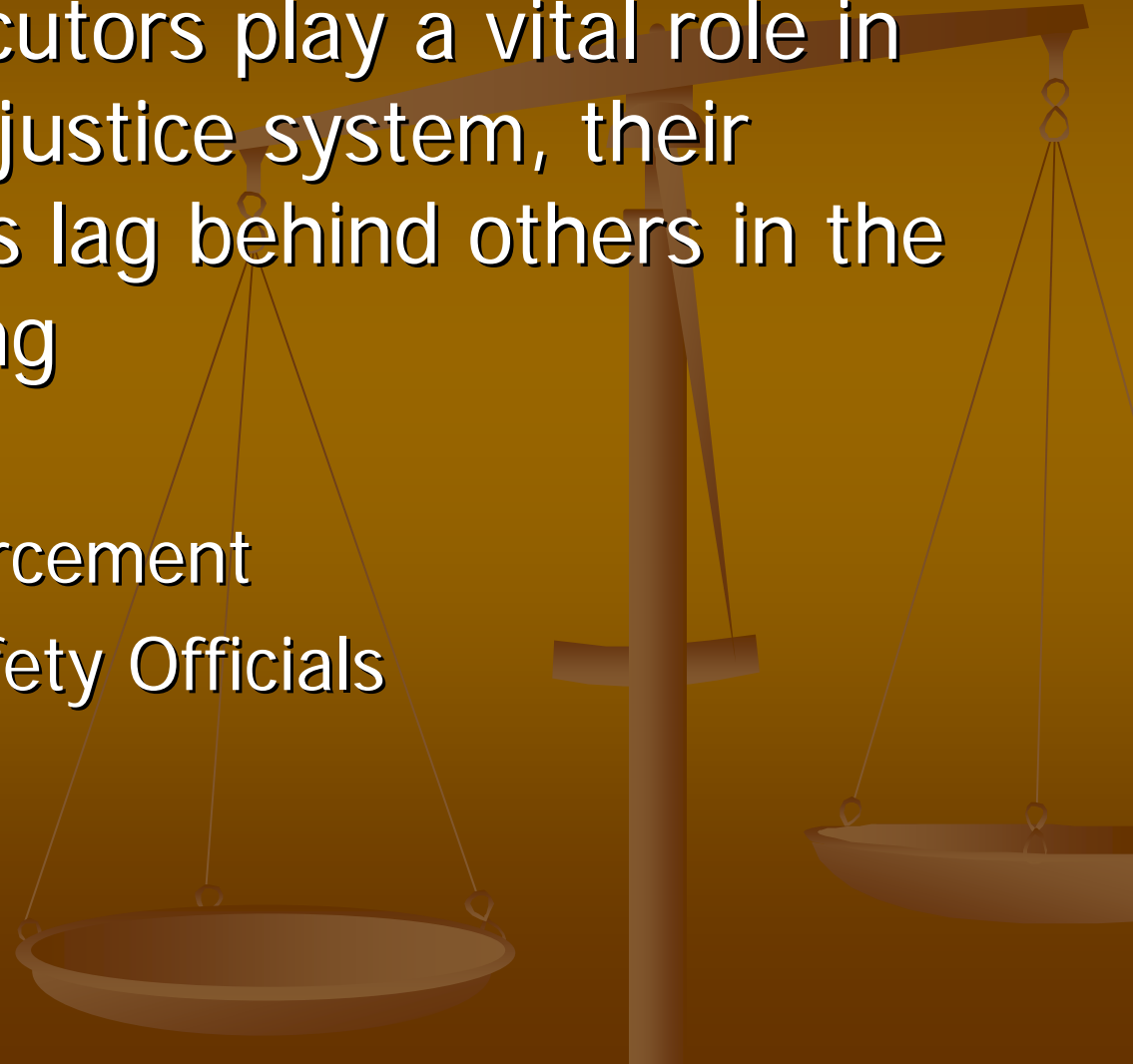
A proposal to help attract and retain prosecutors & create parity in justice pensions in Iowa

# Iowa Prosecutors

- Iowa prosecutors, also known as county attorneys and assistant county attorneys, are solely responsible for criminal charging decisions and for the prosecution of all state criminal offenses.
  - The quality of justice and the safety of our citizens depend upon attracting and retaining qualified and experienced prosecutors.
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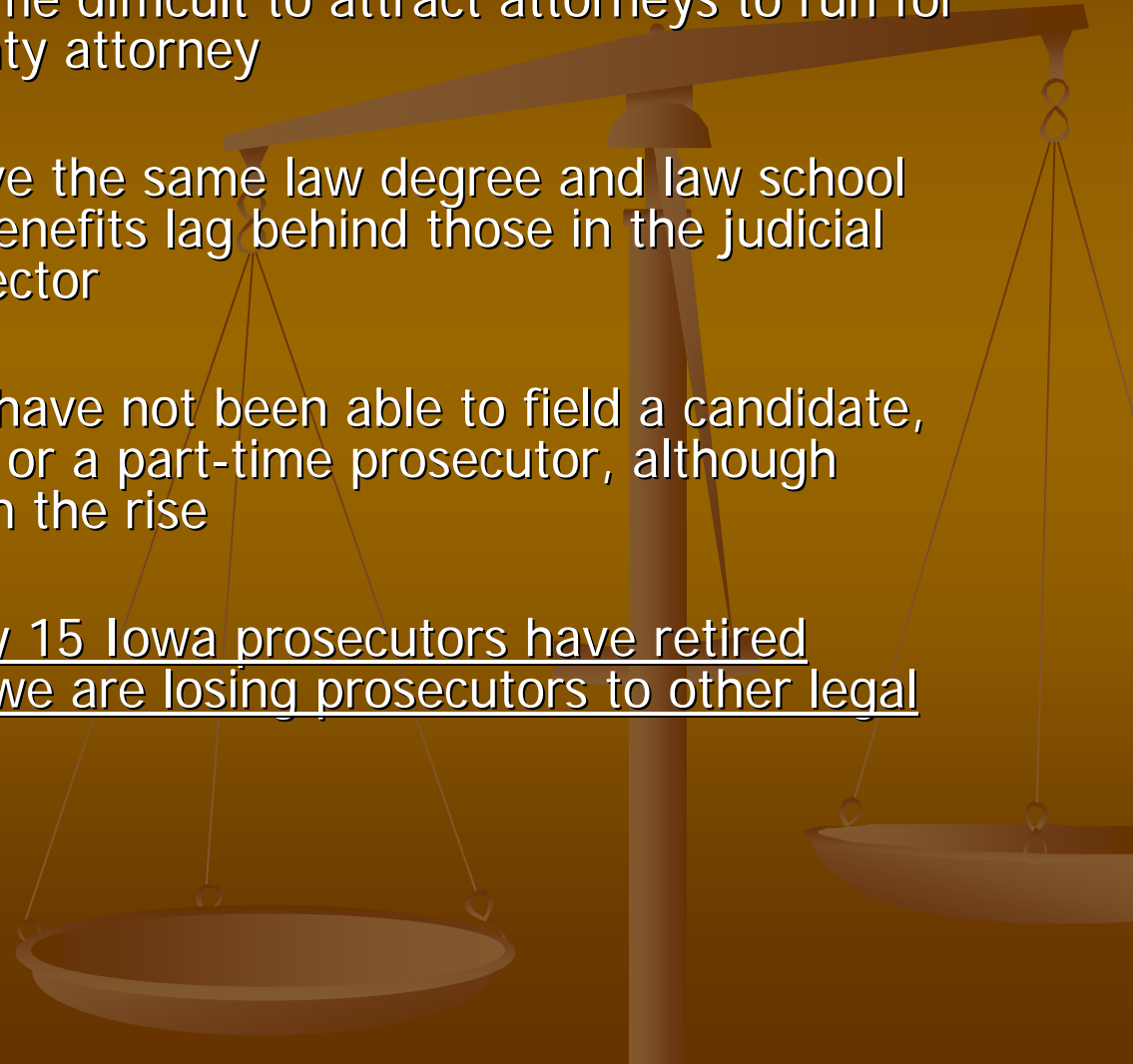
# Pension Comparisons

- Although prosecutors play a vital role in Iowa's criminal justice system, their pension benefits lag behind others in the system, including
  - Judges
  - Local Law Enforcement
  - State Public Safety Officials



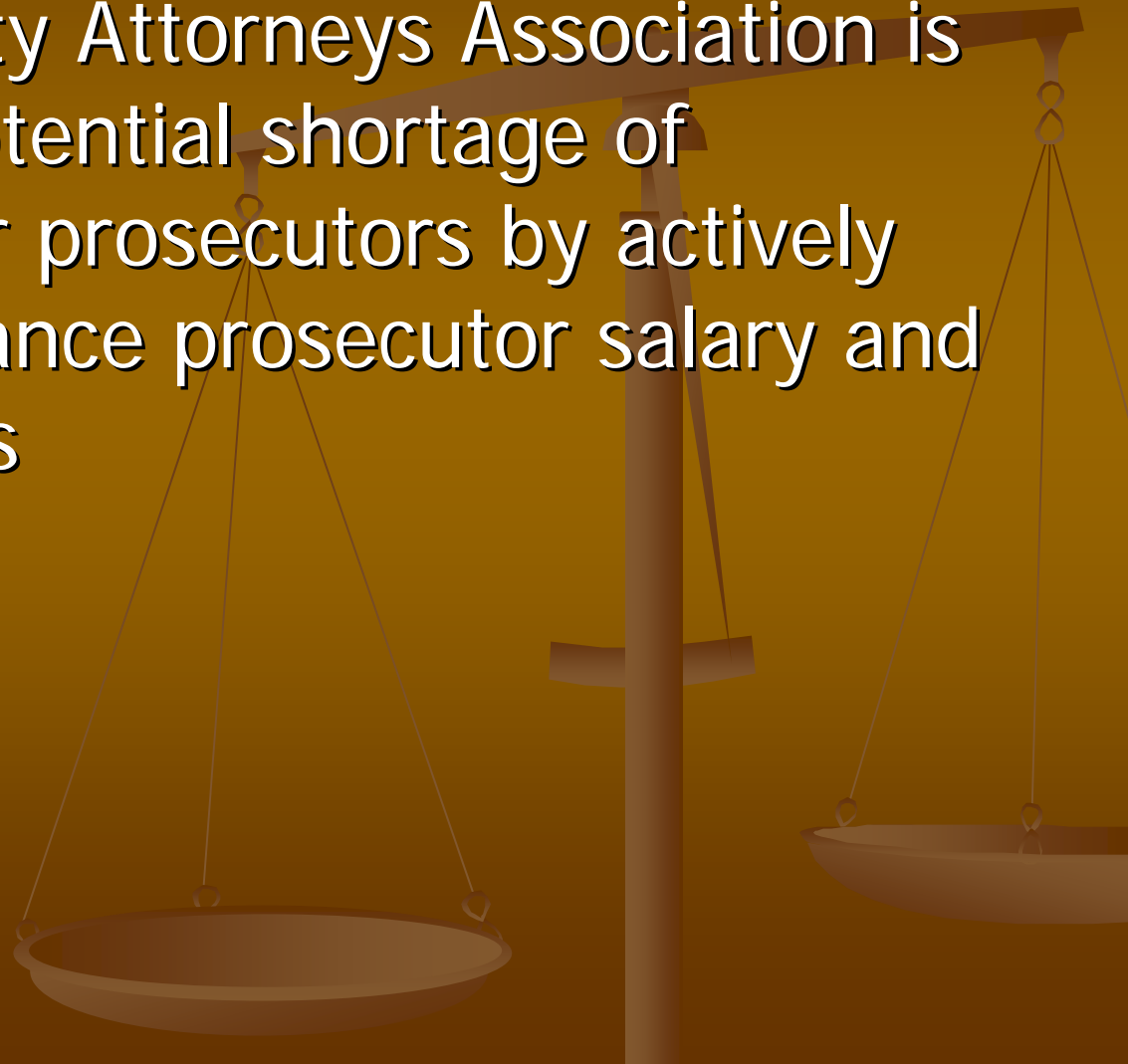
# WANTED: Career Prosecutors

- In recent years, it's become difficult to attract attorneys to run for the elected office of county attorney
- Although prosecutors have the same law degree and law school debt, their salaries and benefits lag behind those in the judicial branch and the private sector
- Recently, some counties have not been able to field a candidate, relying on other counties or a part-time prosecutor, although criminal case loads are on the rise
- In the past 10 years, only 15 Iowa prosecutors have retired statewide, which means we are losing prosecutors to other legal professions



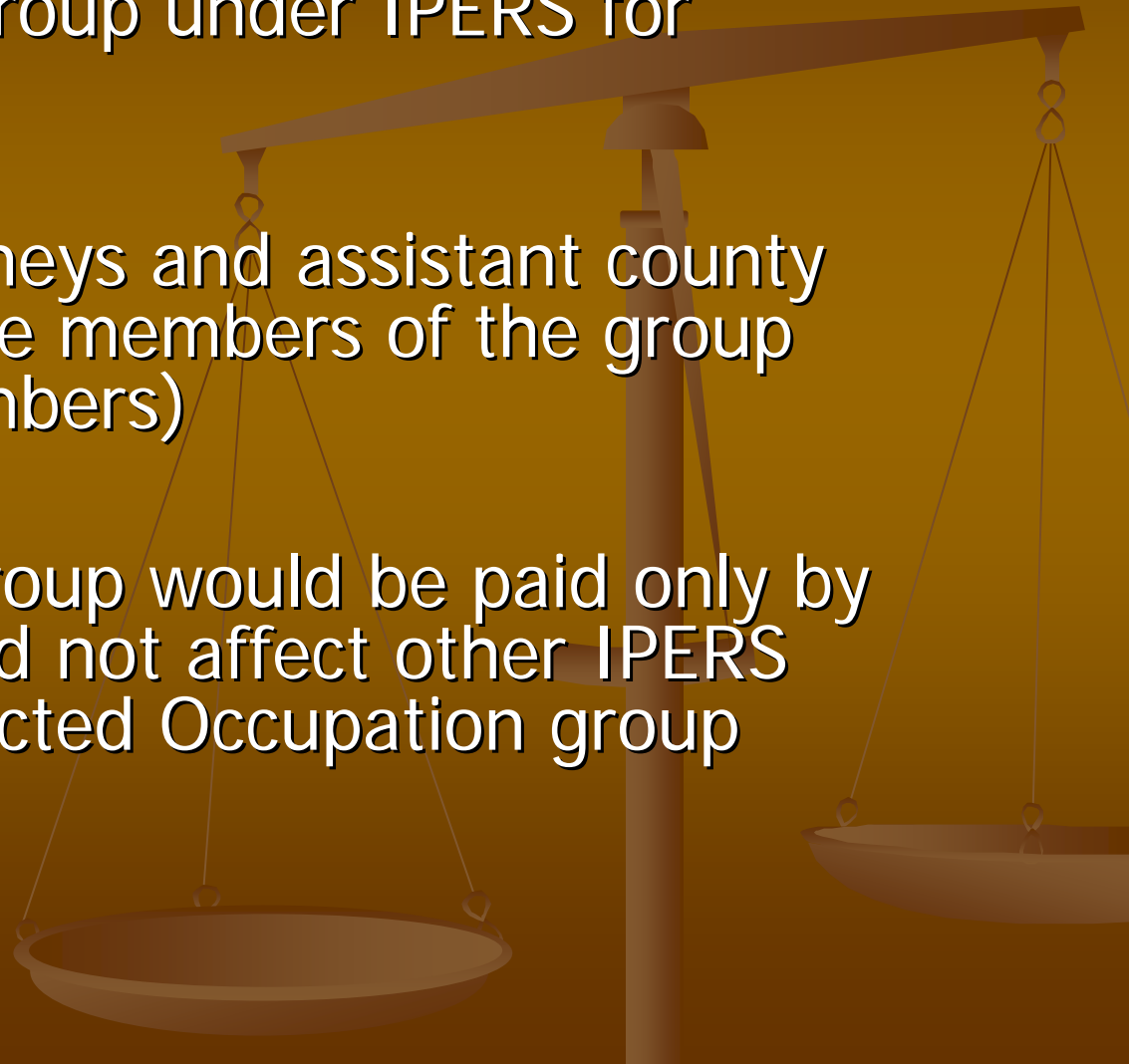
# Attracting Iowa Prosecutors

- The Iowa County Attorneys Association is addressing a potential shortage of qualified, career prosecutors by actively working to enhance prosecutor salary and pension benefits

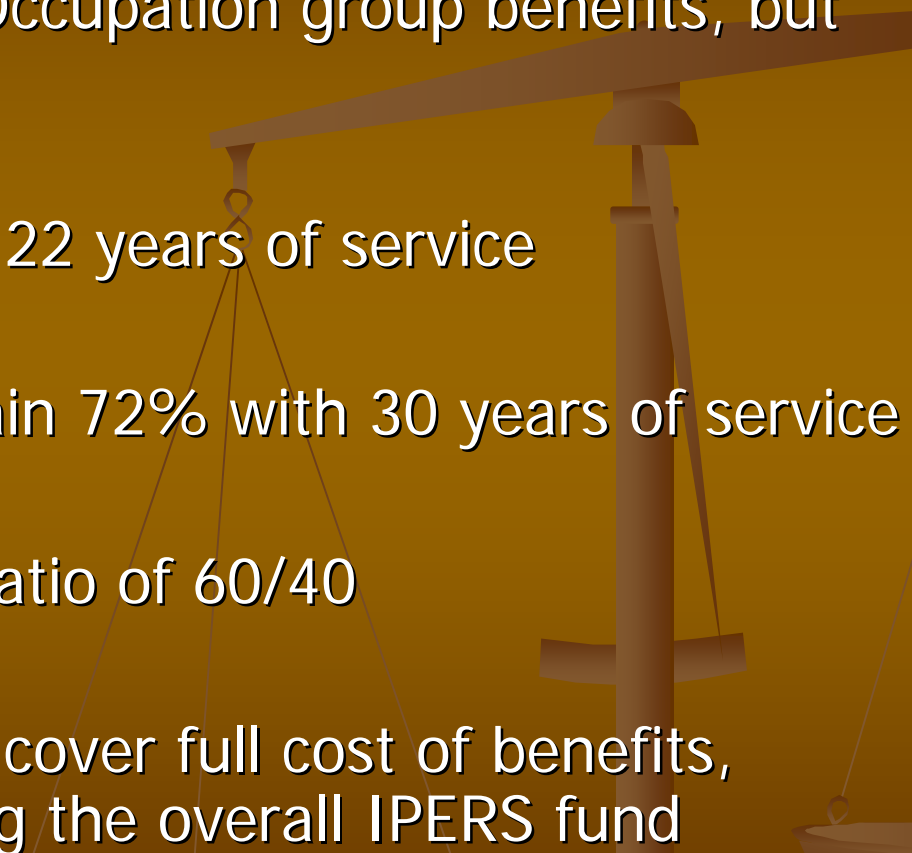


# Prosecutor Pension Proposal

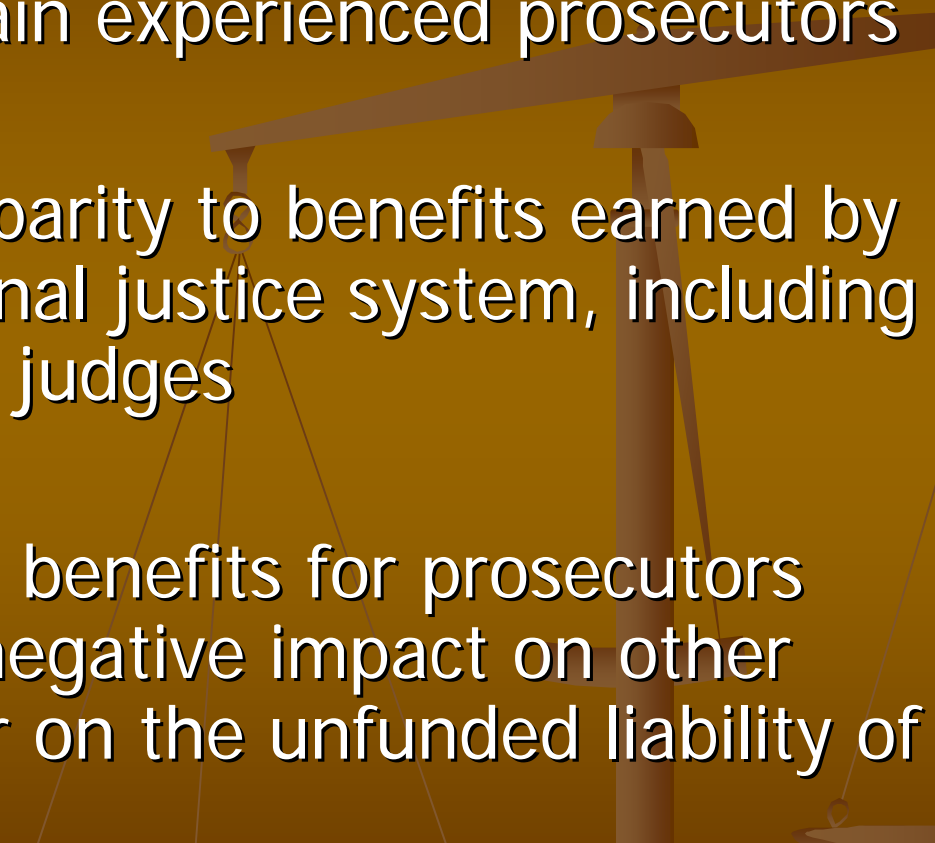
- Create a special group under IPERS for prosecutors
- Only county attorneys and assistant county attorneys would be members of the group (Approx. 380 members)
- Benefits for the group would be paid only by prosecutors; would not affect other IPERS members or Protected Occupation group members



# Proposed Prosecutor Plan Benefits

- Similar to Protected Occupation group benefits, but calculated separately
  - Retire at age 55 with 22 years of service
  - Grandfather in to attain 72% with 30 years of service
  - Employer/employee ratio of 60/40
  - Pay a floating rate to cover full cost of benefits, therefore not affecting the overall IPERS fund
- 

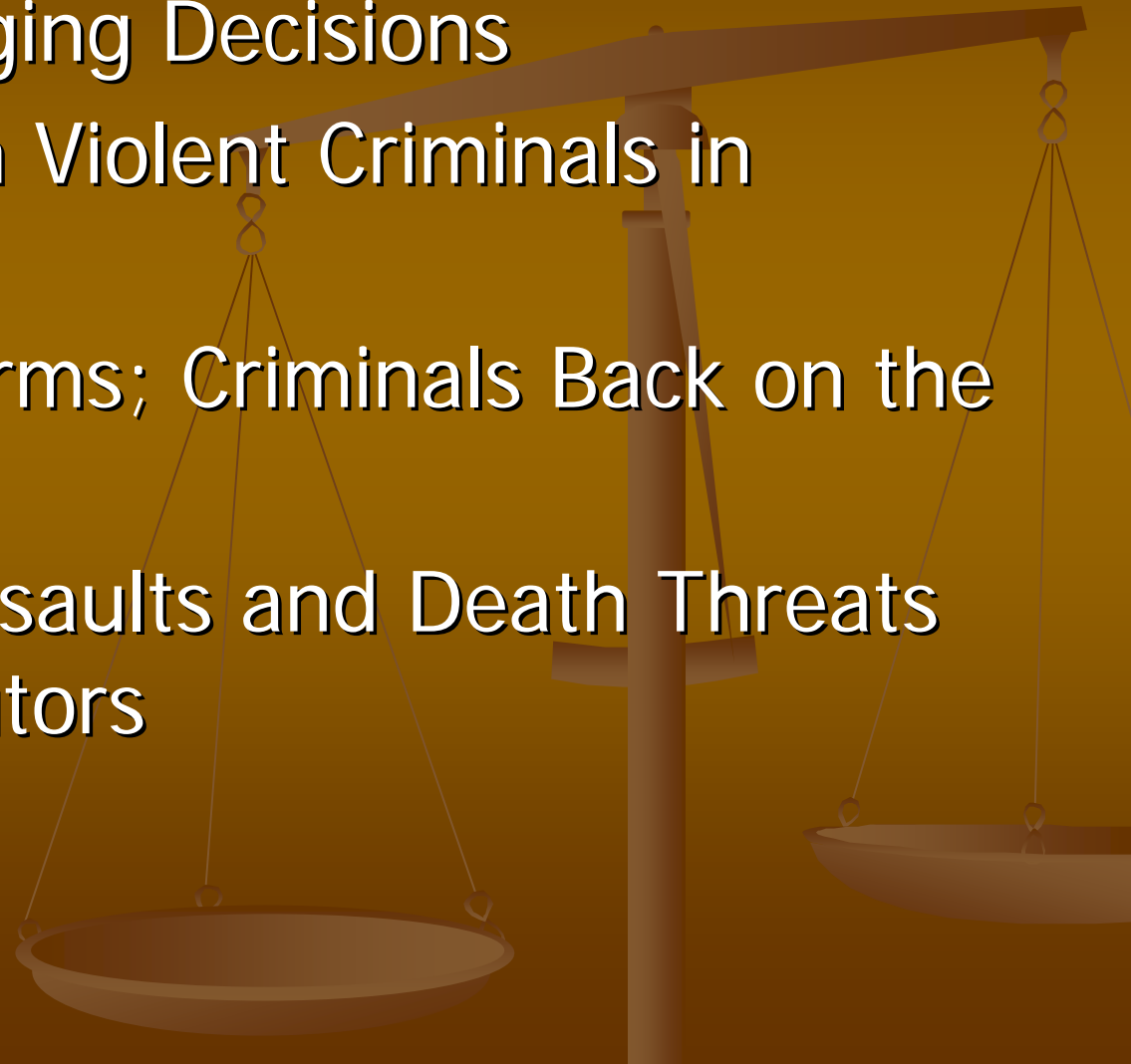
# Why This Makes Sense

- To attract and retain experienced prosecutors
  - To achieve closer parity to benefits earned by others in the criminal justice system, including peace officers and judges
  - To enhance IPERS benefits for prosecutors without having a negative impact on other IPERS members or on the unfunded liability of the fund
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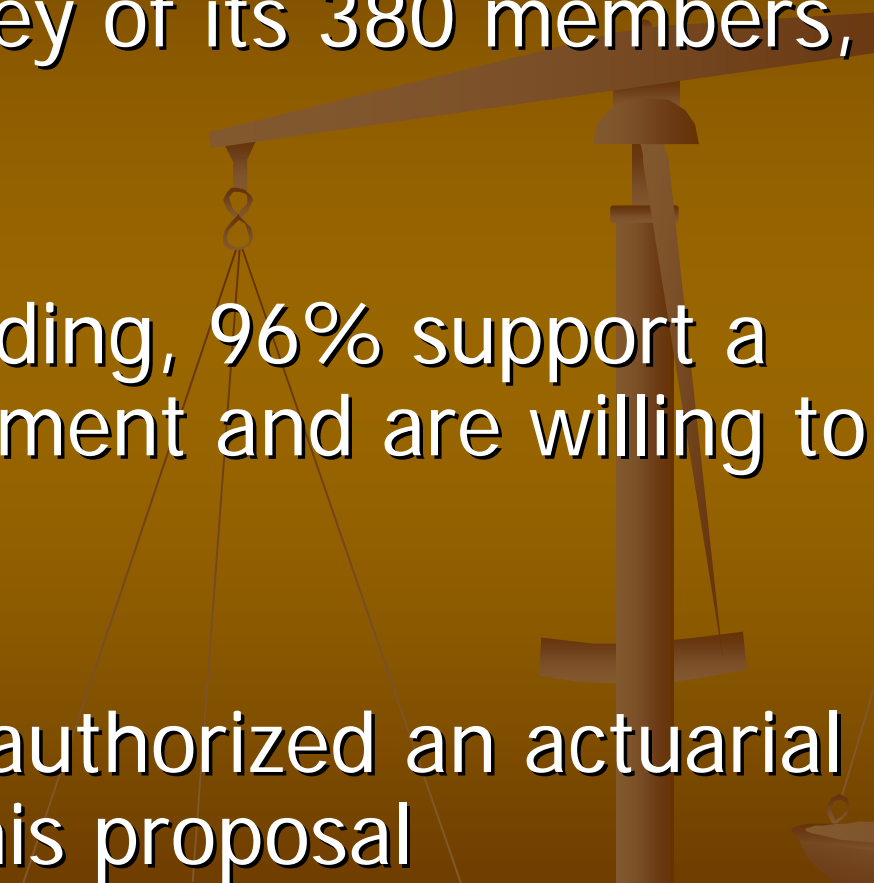


# Why Parity? Risks & Dangers

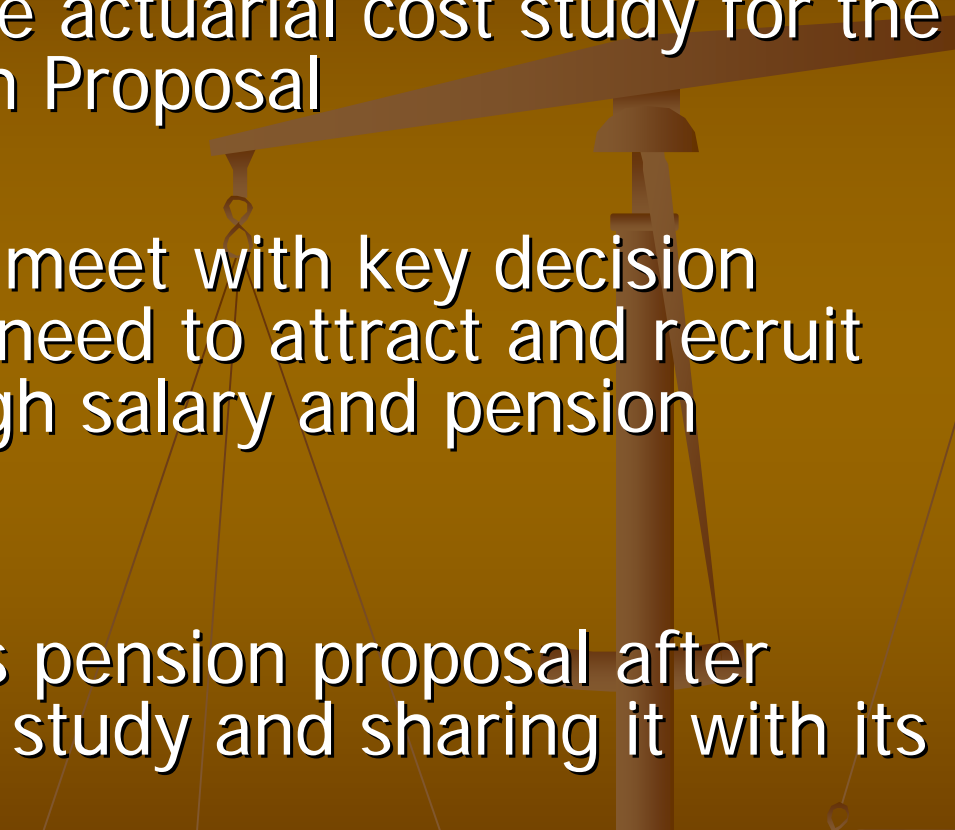
- CAs Make Charging Decisions
- CA Contact with Violent Criminals in Courtrooms
- Short Prison Terms; Criminals Back on the Street
- Documented Assaults and Death Threats Against Prosecutors



# Now is the Time

- In an ICAA survey of its 380 members, 204 responded
  - Of those responding, 96% support a benefit enhancement and are willing to pay for it
  - IPERS BAC has authorized an actuarial cost study for this proposal
- 

# What's Next

- IPERS conducts the actuarial cost study for the Prosecutor Pension Proposal
  - ICAA continues to meet with key decision makers about the need to attract and recruit prosecutors through salary and pension enhancements
  - ICAA formalizes its pension proposal after receiving actuarial study and sharing it with its 380 members
- 

# Questions??

- ICAA Contacts on the Prosecutor Pension Proposal:
    - Ray Blase, Polk County Attorneys Office
    - Tom Ferguson, Black Hawk County Attorney
    - Wayne Reisetter, Dallas County Attorney
    - Corwin Ritchie, Iowa County Attorneys Assoc.
    - Susan Cameron, Legislative Liaison, ICAA
    - Joe Kelly, Legislative Liaison, ICAA
- 

## PROSECUTOR RISKS & DANGERS

**The following are real experiences of Iowa prosecutors that demonstrate the risks and dangers, including the emotional stress, they face every day in the line of duty.**

*“I stayed late at the office to work on a trial. When I got into my car to leave, I was brutally attacked and beaten by an unknown assailant. He struck me repeatedly in the head and face, breaking my nose.”*

*“In open court, a domestic violence victim threatened three times that if I did not dismiss the criminal charges on her husband, she would kill me.”*

*“A number of years ago, the county was cleaning up sex clubs and illegal nude-dancer bars. The Sheriff tipped that an unhappy bar owner had hired someone to kill me. He suggested I get a weapon, learn to use it, and always carry it.”*

*“A defendant stated that he “was going to get a gun and kill that female prosecutor’ after he was convicted of stalking and other crimes against female victims. I had earlier been warned by his attorney to give the case to a male in the office as his hatred of me was so intense. I was very frightened when he was paroled.”*

*“I was prosecuting a woman with two young children. We had terminated parental rights to one of her children and were progressing to terminate on the other. In a report to the Court, I read that “Mary recently told her psychologist that she had sought a pistol from friends so that she could kill Ray Blase.”*

*“I prosecuted two parents in Juvenile Court and had removed all five of their children. The father testified in open Court that he had visions of “caving in the back of your (referring to me) skull and watching you die slowly.’ This man was capable of doing this. Recently his wife was reported on in the news as one of Des Moines’ recent homicide victims.”*

*“There was a point last year when one of the defendants I prosecuted began to make statements about killing both a prosecutor and his defense counsel. The threats appeared credible based upon multiple statements received from jail informants, phone calls we monitored from prison, and some physical evidence we recovered from one of his associates. Since that time, I rotate the manner in which I leave the office to go to my car and the route I take home.”*

*“I have been threatened, assaulted and there have been attempts at intimidation. Unlike police officers, I am unarmed.”*

*There are many more examples of the dangerous nature of the work of prosecutors, especially as it relates to the unpredictable behavior of persons in mental health cases.*