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IMBIBING
is growing in Supreme
Court elections.

Wisconsin's Supreme Court FACES A GRAVE THREAT.

Special interests that used to concentrate on influencing the way laws are made have now turned their attention to controlling how laws are interpreted and enforced. Their plan is simple. Get rid of judges who don't rule in their favor. **Their playbook is familiar. Money, and lots of it. Half-truths and outright lies. Smears and character assassinations.**

You don't treat cancer with acne cream...

Some think there's no need for court election reform of any kind in Wisconsin. Others acknowledge that something needs to be done about falling public confidence in the integrity of our courts and the fairness and impartiality of state judges, but insist that no more than voluntary candidate agreements to run clean campaigns is needed.

It's even been suggested that the answer to growing partisanship in court races is to just accept this disturbing trend and allow judicial candidates to run under a party banner. Or give up on impartiality and allow court candidates to plainly say how they would rule on specific cases.

...or by killing the patient.

A few are pushing to end contested elections for the state Supreme Court altogether. They don't believe voters can be trusted to choose judges, and want them appointed either by the governor or a commission of legal experts in a system known as "merit selection."

Switching from court elections to appointments can't be done without amending the state constitution, something that takes years and must be

ratified by the voters in a statewide referendum. No state has switched from electing judges to appointing them in 30 years. **Can we afford to wait while the cancer in our court system spreads?**

What's needed is a full-strength cure. Now.

A thorough overhaul of court elections is needed. Two reforms—supported by both Democrats and Republicans—get to the root of the problems plaguing the highest court in our land.

The first is the Impartial Justice bill, which creates publicly financed state Supreme Court elections. Supreme Court candidates would be freed from the campaign money chase and those elected could act independently of the special interest influences that are contaminating our justice system.

The second crucial reform is full disclosure of special interest campaigning. This would pull back the curtain and let the public see who's pulling the levers in court campaigns. And prevent groups from dancing around existing state laws limiting campaign contributions. Thus stopping them from hijacking campaigns, turning candidates into mere bystanders and controlling what the public reads, sees and hears about who should serve on the Supreme Court.

The votes are there to pass these reforms right now.

Most of the members of the Assembly and Senate already are on record in favor of the Impartial Justice bill and special interest electioneering. All that remains is for them to do what they've publicly pledged to do.

A CANCER

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