http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/wis-supreme-court-s5.jpg



Both candidates in Tuesday's judicial election acknowledge that conflicts of interest are a serious problem for the fair and impartial execution for justice, but how serious are they about this goal? Take a look at the candidates' responses before you head to the polls.

MADISON - The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin takes our mission to educate voters by sharing candidates' answers very seriously. So why exactly, if we only asked the candidates for the Wisconsin Supreme Court four questions, was one of them about something called "recusal?" In short, because it is a critical protection to ensure equal and fair justice in every courtroom in Wisconsin.

For the non-lawyerly among us, "recusal" simply means to disqualify themselves from hearing that case due to an actual or perceived conflict of interest. If you like to think in terms of sports, think of recusal as if a referee is the best-friend of the Vikings head coach - they shouldn't be allowed to call the Packers-Vikings game. If a judge has an investment in a company, or the company is a big-campaign donor, or the attorney representing them is the judge's daughter, the judge should not be allowed to rule on the case. This is common sense for Wisconsinites. A poll in 2017 reported that 82% of us agree that judges should have standards regarding recusal. Yet, surprisingly Wisconsin's justices are not in favor of requirements for transparency and disclosure of campaign contributions so the public can know which special interests are trying to influence the election and future court decisions.



