

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2020

MILWAUKEE, Wis. — Chief Judge Pamela Pepper announced today that the district judges of the United States District Court have selected Stephen Caffrey Dries, of Brookfield, to serve as the next magistrate judge in the Eastern District of Wisconsin, effective April 7, 2020. The Eastern District, home to some 3.4 million residents, consists of the twenty-eight counties in the eastern half of Wisconsin. The federal district court has five district judge positions, three full-time magistrate judges and one part-time magistrate judge in Green Bay. Chief Judge Pepper swore the new judge in during a short ceremony, viewed remotely by family, friends and colleagues.

A Wauwatosa native, Judge Dries (pronounced “Dreese”) graduated from Marquette University High School and received an honors degree from Georgetown University and a law degree, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Wisconsin Law School, where he was an articles editor of the *Law Review*. He also studied for one year at the London School of Economics. He began his legal career as a corporate lawyer with the Chicago law firm of Jenner & Block LLC, then entered government service, where he held judicial clerkships with the Hon. Diane S. Sykes of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and the Hon. William C. Griesbach of the United States District Court. For the last three years he has served as clerk of court for the Eastern District, managing a staff of some forty employees and a budget of \$5 million.

The Eastern District’s magistrate judges serve as the presiding judges in civil cases and conduct pretrial hearings in criminal felony cases. Other duties include reviewing search and arrest warrants, conducting mediations, and presiding over citizenship naturalization ceremonies. Magistrate judges are selected through a process involving a panel of prominent members of the community, seven of whom are attorneys. The Merit Selection Panel reviewed thirty-six applications and, after conducting sixteen interviews, narrowed the field to five finalists. After a second round of interviews, the district judges made their selection from among the finalists. Magistrate judges serve renewable terms of eight years.

Chief Judge Pepper stated, “The court is excited to welcome Judge Dries to this new stage of his court career. Judge Dries has been an outstanding clerk of court; while the court hates to lose his expertise and talent in that capacity, we look forward to his bringing his intelligence, efficiency and kindness to his new role as a magistrate judge. The court also wishes to publicly thank the Merit Selection Panel, chaired by Attorney Daniel Flaherty. The panel’s yeoman work under significant time constraints, and during the 2019 holiday season, is a credit to the panelists’ commitment to the public mission of the District Court.” The other members of the Merit Selection Panel were Scott Hansen, Jackie Herd-Barber, Michelle Jacobs, Vada Lindsey, Patrick Murphy, T. Wickham Schmidt, Thomas Shriner, Jr. and Julie Wilson.

“I am humbled to have been chosen to serve the court, and the public, in this new capacity,” Mr. Dries said. “Leaving the fine public servants in the clerks’ office is bittersweet, but I have the honor of joining an esteemed bench of judicial colleagues, from whom I have already learned a great deal. And now I must figure out where to buy a black robe.”